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SPEAIGHT.

157, New Bond Street, W.

HAZEL AND ROSE, DAUGHTERS OF MR. GERALD BUXTON.



THE Journal for all interested in

Country Life and Country Pursuits

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THE BEST MEMORIAL.

It is announced by a contemporary that the estate of Somersby is coming into the market, and we hope that the occasion will be seized to carry out a scheme proposed in these columns two or three years ago. We need not recall the fact that the famous rectory there was the birthplace of Alfred Tennyson, and that the scenery all around is closely associated with the great poet's memory. There is the brook of which he sang so sweetly, the high dark wold from which "the summer wind blows cool," the glen where is the rock on which he wrote "Byron is dead," the gray old grange, occupied in his time by the prototype of the Northern farmer, and there are the scenery and surroundings which moulded the Tennysonian poems. It has been said that Tennyson grew as naturally as a flower out of this Lincolnshire rectory. He was and is to this day the representative of that England which it typifies. No other poet in our language was moulded to such a degree by his environment as Tennyson, and no other poet owes so much of his charm to the scenes among which his childhood was spent. Now Somersby has long been a shrine for American and other pilgrims anxious to pay their homage to the late Laureate of England. They come in many cases without much knowledge of their idol, and ask most curious questions of the people at Somersby. Our proposal was one for their benefit. We suggested that the old rectory and the Grange adjoining it should both be purchased and turned into a Tennyson museum, much in the style in which the Johnson museum has been started at Lichfield. The latter has proved quite a successful institution, and Tennyson owns a name which is probably more widely known, and is more admired in the England of to-day, than even that of Samuel Johnson is, so that there is every prospect of

carrying out the project with great success. It only wants some one with enthusiasm to take it up and put it into practical shape.

Let us try, as soberly as we can, to estimate the advantage that might follow from the adoption of this scheme. It would be obviously futile unless it be granted that Lord Tennyson holds a position worthy of such a memorial. Few will deny this assumption. Some of us believe that he had great and rigid limitations, due in some measure to the atmosphere in which he was brought up. It has been urged against him by many critics, from Taine downwards, that he was somewhat *bourgeois* in his conceptions, and lacking in sympathy with what we may describe as the ragged Bohemian element of literature. Some people never can forgive him the ending of Lancelot, where he replaced the wild beauty of the original by what might have been the fifth act of an Adelphi melodrama. The Idylls, too, are mostly what Carlyle called them—sugar-plums—and in no wise comparable to the stirring pages of Malory. Yet, when all this is admitted, Tennyson still remains one of the most consummate masters of the English tongue, and one at least of the "Idylls of the King" is likely to hold for ever a high place in our literature and the literature of the world. We refer, of course, to "The Passing of Arthur." But not on this alone does the immortality of the poet depend. In what he called his "Idylls," with one "1," "The Grandmother," "Locksley Hall," "The Northern Farmer," and the class of poems to which they belong, he has pictured the Lincolnshire of his day and generation as vividly as Chaucer, or the author of "Piers Plowman" pictured the rural England of their day and generation; and Tennyson lived in a time that ever becomes more interesting as the years pass by, because of the changes it witnessed. It is the fashion now to talk of the revolution accomplished by the penny post, the application of steam to locomotion, and the invention of electricity as a controllable force, but there was still another factor in the England to which Tennyson was born.

He was old enough at the time of the Battle of Waterloo to retain some dim memory of the arrival of the news, and that event was the end of a war which exercised the most signal influence on rural England. It had sent up wheat and other farm produce to the most abnormal prices, with the result that farmers concentrated their energy on the work of reclamation. One sees how full the poems are of memories, of times when the marsh was being drained, the wastes stubbed and ploughed, and even the high wold brought under the influence of the plough. So, again, it will require a commentary to explain the references to tithes in the Tennysonian poems. Young people have to be told, and the old are apt to forget, that up to the year 1837, when the Commutation Act was passed, tithes were paid in kind. That form of bucolic humour which included a reference to the tithe pig, or the difficulty experienced by the parson in collecting his dues, was far from having grown obsolete when Tennyson was at the meridian of his power. But since then how extraordinary is the change that has passed over the country districts of England! It is as if a new heaven and a new earth had been created. And yet the poems themselves remain the expression of the most modern thought. Tennyson was before his time in many respects. He looked forward eagerly to inventions and changes that only now are taking place, and the accidental conditions in which garth and homestead were at the time of his writing did not blind him to the elementary and immortal truths that as it were lay behind the physical phenomenon. His country poems, it is not too much to say, have the element of immortality in them as much as the Bucolics of Virgil have it. Nor can we believe that they will ever pass out of the living attention of the British public. But if these facts only approximate to the truth, then nothing could be more desirable than that the admirers of Tennyson should found a museum at his birthplace. There can be no desecration, because, at the present moment, the place is inhabited only by respectable Lincolnshire farmers, who have got no particular association with the memory of the poet, and who could not be expected to keep things as they were in his time. Yet very little expense would be involved in making the lawn precisely what it was when, in the all-golden afternoon, a bride or happy sister would come and fling a ballad to the brightening moon. The garden, too, could be trimmed and made as the Tennysons left it. Little else requires to be changed. No doubt many articles of furniture that were purchased in the neighbourhood would be sent back if the museum were made. And, indeed, now is the time to collect relics of all sorts, for if the years are allowed to slip past many of these will disappear entirely. There is, then, every possible inducement to carry out the scheme we have outlined.

Our Portrait Illustration.

OUR frontispiece this week is a portrait of Hazel and Rose, daughters of Mr. and Mrs. Gerald Buxton of Birch Hall, Theydon Bois, Essex.



KING EDWARD VII., who possesses all the tact and sympathy of his illustrious mother, performed a very fitting ceremony on Saturday night, when he decorated four of the Hull fishermen, who distinguished themselves on the night of the Dogger Bank tragedy, with medals. "You well deserve it" were his simple words to the men. To have elaborated them would have been in vain. It was a fitting close to an incident that on the whole reflects honour on Great Britain. The trouble arose at first entirely through the blunders of the Russian Navy, and this country sought redress in a legitimate manner, but with a determination to take no denial. When the award was given our people cut it down below the figure which Russia was willing to pay, and which the commission had appointed. This was entirely in keeping with the character of honour and integrity earned by Englishmen, and we doubt if there are many nations in the world in which a similar occurrence could have taken place. In Hull, no doubt, the incident will pass into the annals of the place, and be long remembered, but as often as the story is told we may hope that the heroism of those who forgot their own troubles to stay and help their comrades will be remembered with it.

The Board of Trade Report on Employment for April points to a steady if slow improvement in the condition of commerce. In regard to employment there was very little difference between April and March, but some improvement is noted in pig iron and boot and shoe trades, which has to be set against a decline in printing and ship-building, while the cotton and tin-plate trades continue very brisk. The comparison with the same month of 1904 shows that there is a fractional decrease in the number of unemployed, and a general improvement in the iron and steel trades, and in the cotton, woollen, boot and shoe, furnishing, and wood-working trades. Perhaps the best that can be said about these facts is that they are not opposed to the theory of a revival of trade being imminent.

It is not generally thought that commercial travellers as a class stand much in need of outside tuition, and yet they might learn something from a report by Mr. Bernal, British Consul at Stettin. He quite recognises the difficulty of extending British trade in his district, but at the same time points out certain methods by which something could be done. The chief factor must be the commercial traveller, but it seems very absurd to send out there, as was done in one case described by him, a gentleman who could not speak the language. One would think that the very first qualification for one who is to seek orders in a foreign country is that he should be a good linguist. In the next place, he should be empowered to make such concessions and obtain such alterations in his goods as are necessary to meet local requirements, since customs and taste vary with the geographical area. Mr. Bernal thinks, too, that the range of articles now on sale should be extended, and points out also that British merchants do not strictly observe the German Customs regulation, which requires that certificates of the origin shall accompany foreign goods redespached from the United Kingdom. These may appear trifling directions, but the success of trade in a large measure depends upon the observance of them.

Sir John Jackson, the well-known Government contractor, brought out some curious information in the speech he made to the Navy Mission the other day. It is undoubtedly true that this type of labourer during the last half century has changed very much. At the time when the railways were being built he used to be notable for the quantity of beef he ate, the amount of brown stout or beer he drank with it, and the fights he had after receiving his pay. But he is a much less tumultuous person nowadays, and, indeed, is fast becoming one of the most respectable members of society. However, the point of Sir John Jackson's speech was the risk he runs. Sir John has calculated that on every million pounds' contract thirty lives are lost, or, in

other words, the number of deaths in relation to contracts is greater than that in a campaign. Accidents usually occur through a man running among waggons and slipping down holes, and we are afraid it must be added that they often are due to the carelessness of the men, whose very familiarity with danger often is the cause of fatal results. It is well worth considering, however, if steps could not be taken to diminish the proportion of deaths. We have got those from railway accidents down to a satisfactory proportion, and the next point requiring attention would seem to be contracting.

A recent decision of the Local Government Board to the effect that prosecution for pollution of rivers could be undertaken only by the sanitary authorities, was the subject of strong comment at last week's meeting of the Salmon and Trout Association. Mr. Willis Bund pointed out the irony of the situation which would be created if the sanitary authority itself was the agent of the pollution. Doubtless it is a situation extremely likely to arise. On the suggestion of Mr. C. H. Cook a recommendation to the council of the association was carried to insert a clause into the English Salmon Amendment Bill, which it is taking charge of, empowering fishery boards to take proceedings under the Rivers Pollution Act. This is, in effect, the system of procedure which has prevailed prior to the recent decision of the Local Government Board. The most satisfactory statement made at the meeting was that of the president, the Duke of Abercorn, that a general increase of salmon was observable. This is peculiarly encouraging in face of the statements about the virtual disappearance of the salmon, which used to be so rife a year or two ago. The extraordinary caprice, as it must appear to us who are not able to analyse the very complex motives which they obey, of fishes' movements is being strikingly shown at the present moment by the enormous numbers of mackerel off the South-Western coasts of England, which results in tons and tons of good fish food being thrown away for lack of means for its distribution and disposal.

A number of salmon from ova brought from the Danube have been hatched out at Mr. W. Gilbey's hatchery near Uxbridge. It is said that this is the first successful experiment in the hatching in this country of these Danubian fish, which reach a weight of 60lb. in their native river. It is suggested that they are to be turned out into the Thames, under the care of the Thames Salmon Association; and though we all desire greatly to see our Thames once more included in the list of British salmon rivers, we might almost wish that these foreigners might be given a less doubtful chance in the struggle for existence, so severe among all fish-life. One of the young salmon was exhibited, in formation, at the meeting held last week of the Piscatorial Society.

MO BRÒN!

(A Song on the Wind.)

O come across the grey wild seas,
Said my heart in pain;
Give me peace, give me peace,
Said my heart in pain.

This is the song of the Swan
On the tides of the wind,
The song of the wild Swan
Time out of mind.

O come across the grey wild seas,
O give me a token!
My head is on my knees,
My heart is broken.

This is the song of the Heart
On the tides of Sorrow:
This is the song of my heart
To-day and to-morrow.

FIONA MACLEOD.

As a common rule the effect of the hand of man on a populous country is to banish most of its original wild inhabitants, but now and then exceptions occur. A pleasant exception of the kind may be noticed in the result of the formation of the large reservoirs from which so many of the great towns are now deriving their supply of water. These big reservoirs have become places of regular resort and the habitat of great numbers of wildfowl of various species, the ducks predominating. Up on the Yorkshire moors, for instance, are many of these reservoirs, supplying the needs of the many towns of that biggest and prosperous shire, and to these the wildfowl resort in immense numbers. It is hardly necessary to say that they are no less favourable for the occupation of trout, whether of the rainbow or Loch Leven

kinds, than of the fowl, and many an owner of a grouse moor who deemed himself hardly used when a corporation took from him an acre or two for its reservoir—paying a handsome price for the “amenity”—has found the big piece of water thus put into his property much more of a blessing than a curse, because of its fish and fowl.

At this period of the year bird-nesting is a very favourite pursuit, and there is always more or less of a contention between those who would have young people see Nature at first hand, and others whose jealous guardianship of our wild creatures goes to the opposite extreme. Our columns bear witness, however, to the scientific interest of bird-nesting. The subject of coloration, for instance, concerning which we have had some interesting correspondence, is full of perplexities that can only be settled by collecting eggs to a large extent, and, unluckily to the scientist, a single egg is of very little use. In order to pursue his enquiries with any hope of success, he must have complete clutches of eggs, so that he may see to what extent they vary in colour, shape, and so forth. The scientific student, it should be remarked, is not very numerous in the land, and, on the whole, we should be inclined to think that he does no harm; while the bird-nesting schoolboys are not usually finished naturalists, and content themselves with finding the most common nests. The one person who is most likely to injure our avifauna is the collector, because, the more scarce a bird is, the higher does its money value become.

A correspondent writes to us from the North to say that the sea-birds are not nesting well this year on the Farne Islands. He says the birds “are very late this year. Only about two or three pair of terns, and not a quarter of the eider ducks that are generally here at this time of the year. We have had one dottrel hatch out of four young. I think the weather has killed two of them. Several lapwings have hatched off on the other islands.” We may say that the correspondent in question is an official who has resided on the island for a long period of years, and therefore speaks with authority on the subject. Probably it is only an incidental fluctuation of bird-life, and does not point to any permanent decrease. More deplorable in some respects is the great scarcity of swallows which is reported from various parts of the country. These migrants have been arriving here in decreasing numbers for several years past, and every lover of the open-air would deplore the loss of the most graceful of our outdoor companions in summer.

The Royal Gardens, Kew, are now in their early summer dress, and within the next few days the bluebells will be in full beauty. These are a sea of colour around the Queen’s Cottage, and form drifts of blue in the many little glades which make these public gardens a restful resort at all times. Groups of lilacs are heavy with flower clusters, the thorns are thick with blossom, and the rhododendron glen a blaze of colour almost as vivid as the massing of May tulips in front of the great palm-house. The gardens are full of colour, and this has been brought about by the wise direction of Sir Thiselton-Dyer and his assistants, who have succeeded in making the Royal Gardens not only, in a way, the centre of botanical influence in Europe, but a place in which the general public may thoroughly enjoy the wonderful grouping of plants. The wild flowers which grow in rich abundance in the more secluded parts are carefully preserved from injury; but it is pleasurable to recall the fact that the visitors are rarely troublesome. The beautiful surroundings seem to have a sobering influence.

Different as is the occasion, “It’s poor eating when the flavour o’ the meat lies i’ the cruets”—one of Mrs. Poyser’s aphorisms—comes to the mind in reading the report on tobacco cultivation in the County of Meath during the past year. Forced to smoke tobacco the flavour of which lies in the adjuncts, not a few of us would prefer to be Imperial and support home products were we assured our palates would not suffer. But there is this obstacle to the development of the industry in the Emerald Isle—tobacco-growing is prohibited! In the recent experiments one-third of the duty was refunded by the Inland Revenue, and commercially they would appear to have been successful. Whether it will be possible to obtain official sanction and a remission of some part of the duty is a question which time must decide. Even a slight concession might indirectly have a pacific effect on Ireland; it would certainly tend to retain labour which might otherwise be employed in swelling an American banking account.

Mr. Akers-Douglas gave the House of Commons a piece of information the other night that would probably be new to most people. The occasion of it was a question from Sir Robert Fowler. Some days ago the Rev. Charles Jennings, who is what is popularly known as a passive resister, was sent to

Worcester Gaol for refusing to pay the Education Rate. To solace himself during his period of enforced leisure he took three books with him, “The Imitation of Christ,” “The Commentaries of Julius Cæsar,” and the “Essays of Elia.” No one so far as we know has yet made out a list of books suitable for solitude, but if it were attempted it would be difficult to name a better library than the minister wished to carry with him. However, the hard-hearted governor refused to let him take more than two, and while admitting “The Imitation of Christ” and the Cæsar, he rejected poor Elia, probably on the ground that he was too frivolous for prison. Mr. Akers-Douglas, defending the official, said that prisoners were expected to take their reading from the prison library, and that it was really a favour that an exception should be made so far as to allow this particular person to take any books. We have no doubt he was properly explaining the law on the subject; but it would seem to be an exquisite addition to the ordinary punishment if prisoners were, in addition to the sentence imposed upon them, obliged to read books chosen by the prison authorities.

At Manchester the other day a very interesting discovery was made in the course of some excavations in New Brown Street, which brought to light a relic of the primitive water supply. The pipes were hollowed-out tree trunks fitted together so as to make a wooden conduit. The joints were somewhat in the style of those of a fishing-rod, the thin end of one trunk being made to fit into the thick end of another. It is supposed that this means of supplying Manchester with water was about 200 years old, and discoveries of the same kind made in other towns go to confirm that view. The boring through the wood was about 4in. in diameter, and it is thought that the water was conveyed from one of the springs in Spring Gardens. Evidently the supply of water in those days was not only much less in absolute quantity than now, but very much less per head of the population.

ON A MAY MORNING.

I will arise and take my way
Along the painted paths of May,
Where Phœbus like a monarch goes,
And every wind with perfume blows,
Where flowers with varied colours dress
The Morning’s maiden loveliness,
Where nightingales do sweetly sing
The lovely requiem of Spring,
And where from echoing hills remote
There comes the cuckoo’s double note.

I will with dew of morning fresh
Anoint my body’s fainting flesh,
And with Heaven’s inner dew unseen
Make all my spirit sweet and clean,
That spreading pinions wide and fair,
It may escape into the air,
And like a lark on freedom’s wing
Amongst the white Celestials sing,
Or caught to some diviner height,
Be mingled with the Infinite.

For here on this delightful day
I put my baser self away,
And give those thoughts an ampler space
That dwell on God’s abounding grace;
But looking on these fragrant flowers,
All dewy with the morning hours,
I with a humbled heart confess
My own exceeding littleness,
To feel no thought can spring in me
To match their stainless purity.

R. G. T. COVENTRY.

When one hears of the extraordinary prices that a modern man of letters, if he is popular at all, expects for his work, it forces a contrast between the state of things now and what it used to be. A letter of Oliver Goldsmith that was sold at Messrs. Sotheby’s the other day illustrated the change that has taken place in the status of a man of letters. In it Goldie apologises for not going on a visit because he had not been able to obtain the £60 promised him for his last literary effort, “She Stoops to Conquer,” a work out of which many thousands must have been made since. He says, “My health is shattered by continual illness, and my soul sickened by the everlasting state of this city.” Like a late writer, Thomas de Quincey, Oliver Goldsmith had to spend many an hour upon the street because he had nowhere else to go to, and even those of his contemporaries who died in prosperity had, of course, all their lives experienced a degree of want to which a writer of to-day is not often exposed. Yet we do not know that the advantage is altogether on the side of the twentieth century. On the contrary, some of the antics of the modern man of letters remind us of the words “Jeshurun waxed strong and kicked.”

FISHERMEN'S GRIEVANCES.



W. L. F. Wastell.

"AND THE STately SHIPS PASS BY
TO THEIR HAVEN UNDER THE HILL."

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DURING the past few years more attention has been paid than ever before to the troubles of that estimable class who earn their livelihood from the sea. It cannot be said that all has been plain sailing with them. The industry, as a matter of fact, has undergone a complete revolution, and the changes that have taken place render the work altogether different from what it used to be in the old time. The matters of which complaints are made are quite easily stated. First, we have the laments of the line fisherman, with which the public cannot but feel a great amount of sympathy, even if it does not become apparent that the difficulties are removable. For generations members of the same family have earned their living by going to sea in sailing boats, and catching fish either by means of the line or the net; but this method was practically rendered obsolete when steam came into operation. Little did anyone imagine when the first steam trawler was launched how much it meant for the future. It was to fishing what the invention of other machinery was to the older methods of spinning and

weaving. The hand-worker was left out altogether. But the line fisherman is very persistent in his character, and the love of his craft, that has been accumulated during the ages, cannot be lightly overcome. He kept trying to catch fish in the manner of his forefather, and found it an injury that fleets of steamers should come and sweep spawning grounds before him. It was natural enough for him to believe that these vessels not only took the bread out of his mouth, but inflicted permanent injury upon spawning-beds, and thereby decreased the quantity of fish in the ocean. What truth there is in this has not yet been settled. Our ignorance of the inhabitants of the sea until comparatively recent times was complete, and it has only been removed yet to a slight extent. We do know now where some of the species, but not all of them, spawn, and we have been able to make a more or less shrewd guess at the curious migrations which fish undertake, very much in the same way that birds do, only we are still ignorant of the causes that lead them from time to time to change their route, so that a fishing station, which at one period



F. M. Sutcliffe.

FISHING COBBLES.

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was extremely flourishing, at another falls into decay, while new centres are simultaneously being discovered. In the course of time it may be hoped that far more information will be gathered on these important points, and that it will be possible to trace the life history of nearly every fish in the sea. When that is done the fisherman will be able to pursue his vocation with far more precision than is possible at present; but even then we can scarcely expect to see a revival of line-fishing on any extensive scale. It could scarcely happen unless trawling

were suppressed by legislation, and that is an extremely unlikely occurrence, as there is no real evidence to show that the spawning-beds are interfered with. The line fishermen, therefore, will be well advised to devote their energies to other branches of the craft which trawling does not touch at all. At many places the catching of crabs has become the most important means of their earning a livelihood, and the culture of lobsters is now being studied with far more prospects of success than ever before; so that the maintenance of a supply of shellfish seems to offer plenty of room for employment. At the same time, it is scarcely possible for any reasonable human being to deny that the multiplication of steam trawlers not by individual boats, but by fleets of considerable size, must have the effect of diminishing the supply of fish in the sea. The trawler is not only responsible for the fish that are actually brought to market, but it destroys vast quantities of young and immature fish that otherwise would have kept up the ocean supply. The question, then, is whether some



J. Sparling

ON THE DEEP SEA.

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extensive steps could not be adopted for replenishing the waters of the sea by artificial means.

This has been done with a considerable amount of success in our rivers, but we have to remember that to some extent it has been accomplished regardless of expense, or, at least, so much capital has been laid out that there would be no chance of obtaining interest on it if fish were killed by poor men for the market only. Where a river is profitable it is in nearly every case let to sportsmen who are content

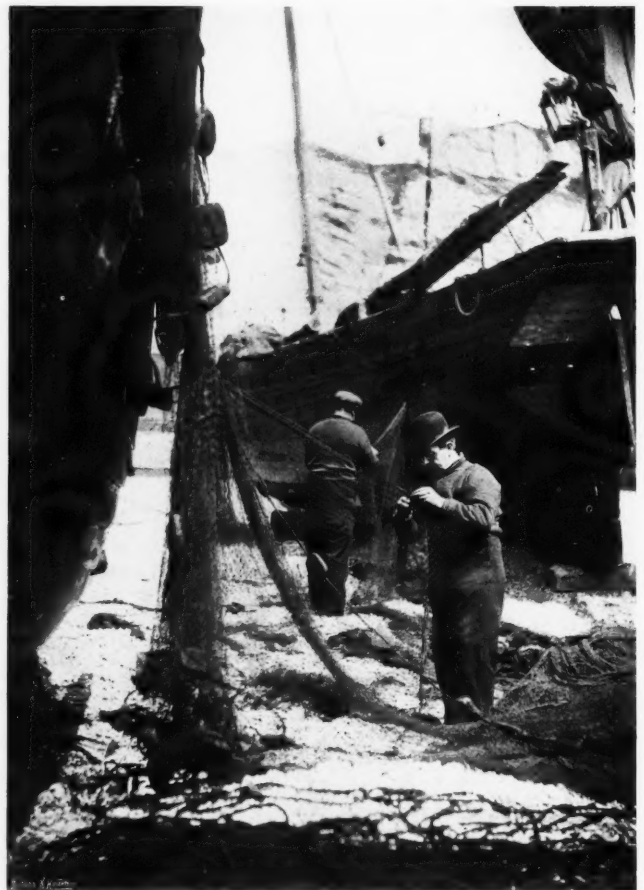
to pay a very handsome price for the privilege they enjoy. We know of a stream not far from London that is very indifferent



H. G. Stollard.

LOADING.

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H. G. Stollard. MENDING THE NETS.

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from a trouting point of view, but for which, nevertheless, the landlord obtains no less than £300 a mile for a part of the course, and we believe that that rental is in many instances exceeded. Thus there may be a very great future in front of the business of hatching salmon and trout, because they are used for rivers that command a great price for sporting purposes; but if the sea were to be treated in the same manner, it would have to be a *sine qua non* that the process should be a cheap one, since the fishermen have to obtain a profit from their catch at the ordinary market prices. The latter have gone up very much during recent years, so that fish, instead of becoming a poor man's dinner, as it was in the middle of the last century, is now an article of luxury that in club and restaurant bills of fare is always charged for at a

high rate. Another factor in bringing about a decrease of fish is undoubtedly the wild sea-birds. These have enjoyed a very great deal of protection recently from the working of the Wild Birds' Protection Acts, and have bred in enormous numbers. Many are most destructive, particularly the cormorant, and must help considerably towards the general decrease of the fish supply. Some people advocate stringent measures with them; but they are so beautiful, either rising and falling on the top of the waves, resting on our rugged cliffs, or flying over the sea and land, that few of us would like to countenance any measures for their destruction. If the fish are growing scarce in the sea, we would much rather see steps taken to replace the loss by artificial hatching, and to help this nothing could be imagined as likely to be more beneficial than the experiments now being made with a view to ascertain how far fish wander from the place where they are laid down, and what is the extent of their migrations.

No doubt, also, there are local influences operating towards the extinction of the race of line fishermen. Anyone who is aware of the number of houses to let on the East Coast of Scotland will be far indeed from suggesting that the phrase used is an exaggeration. And, of course, on the West Coast the case is still more striking. The crofters, who at one time formed so important an element of the population, are disappearing from the face of the earth, and it is difficult to think of any steps that would be effective in restraining their migration. The combination of agriculture and fishing has not proved by experience to be alluring. Long ago people endured it because it was so difficult to find other employment, and the crofter had very often to consider a choice between continuing to follow his craft or expatriating himself. Wages everywhere were small, and living hard. The croft was, therefore, much prized, though even then it was carried on at the cost of very great hardships. The women especially suffered. Fishermen could not believe that after their toil at sea it was any part of their duty to cultivate the land, and so they left that part to their womenkind. This was the real cause why they diminished in number. They discovered



H. G. Stollard.

ON THE QUAY.

Copyright



H. G. Stollard.

"BETWEEN WHILES."

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that town employment was within the reach of any young man, and that it was more lucrative and not so burdensome as that in which they were engaged. Some of them began to move, and the great landowners at the same time discovered that to turn the holdings into deer forests was not an unprofitable change of treatment, for this occurred at a time when the American millionaire began to appear in force, and sought for opportunity to spend his money in the wilds of Scotland.

In social movements of this kind there is very little going back, and it is to be expected that crofters and their kind will continue to fall off in number—no one can see what else can possibly happen: The fact is to be regretted, mainly because these poor fishermen formed a part of the population which could ill be dispensed with. Brought up from childhood to cultivate the virtues of endurance and hardihood, they formed the very finest material out of which either the Navy or the mercantile marine could be manned. It has been the custom for ages for the young men from the islands of the West and North, and from the fishing villages of those desolate coasts, to go off to sea, and either undergo a regular apprenticeship, so as to become officers, or work before the mast. It will be curious to watch if the place left vacant by them is supplied by the trawlers. After all, navigation is nowadays much concerned with the management of machinery, and the crew of a modern ship must consist largely of mechanics. Sails are scarcely ever used, and even oars are going out of fashion, as the captain of a first-class vessel makes his short journeys in some description of petrol or steam launch. On a man-of-war it is the same, and, as the Irishman has it, even more so. The sailor-man of to-day may live for weeks without handling an oar, even in harbour, and his efficiency on board is due more to his knowledge of machinery than to his ability to manage a sail. These, then, are some of the reasons that render the outlook of the fisherman somewhat doubtful. Some of these adverse conditions may be ameliorated by time, but that applies only to fishermen who have adopted the aid of steam. It would be fallacious to hold out any hope of the rehabilitation of the line fisherman. By the improvement of machinery he has been placed in very much the same position as the handloom weaver.

As a class he is bound to disappear, but in his place another has come. The trawler of Hull, Grimsby, Yarmouth, and elsewhere resembles his predecessors in many important respects, especially in a simple manliness that seems to come naturally to those who go down to the sea in ships. But his life in other respects is very different. He is much more away from home, and goes to a greater distance, where he will spend many days at a time at his calling, seeing nobody but

the crews of passing ships, with whom he barter. A vessel is specially told off to carry the catch to market; in fact, there are often several carriers when the fleet is large. A hospital ship is also provided for the sick, and elaborate arrangements for holding religious services and so on are made by the Society for Aiding Deep-sea Fishermen. On shore he does not live in the small communities that old-time fishermen did, but is prone to find a home close to a large town. He is, indeed, very like a labouring mechanic in his habits, and it may possibly be that in the future he is the sort of man who will be most in demand.

FROM THE FARMS.

DOES FARMING PAY?

RECENTLY a melancholy wail has been raised in some of the papers by persons who assert that it is impossible to make farming pay under present conditions. We have frequently expressed an opposite opinion in these pages, and at the present moment feel inclined to adhere to it. What does the phrase "present conditions" convey? In point of fact, the conditions are varying from day to day. One of the most important of them is the price of wheat. Last week it was returned at 30s. 8d., and it has kept at or close to that figure since the first of January. It means that farmers are obtaining 3s. 4d. more than they did in the corresponding week of last year. The official average price of barley for the same time was given at 25s. 3d., and that is 4s. 7d. above what it was in the corresponding week of last year. The price of oats shows an advance of 1s. 8d. per quarter. It seems to be clearly demonstrated, therefore, that one of the most important conditions that affects the prosperity of the farmer, viz., the price of cereals, is fluctuating in his favour. It is natural to ask, however, if on the average land of Great Britain 30s. a quarter for wheat is a remunerative price? We believe that the majority of practical men would answer in the affirmative. It used to be held as a tenet of belief that the farmer had to get 40s. before he could see a profit; but since then cheapening processes have had to be resorted to. Rents have fallen considerably, and much labour-saving machinery has been introduced; so that it is fairly safe to say that the occupier of an average English farm obtains a profit when he sells his wheat at 30s. a quarter. The only question that remains is whether it be a temporary or permanent change. In our opinion it is the latter, for the causes that led to it seem to be enduring in character. These are, first, that the American farmer is turning his attention more to fruit than corn, so that the United States will not import so largely in future; secondly that for reasons that need not be dwelt upon the Russian supply is likely to be crippled for some years to come; and thirdly that the Indian supply is not to be depended upon. It would appear, then, that the time of excessively cheap food has passed, never to return.

CHARLOCK.

There are certain duties which it would be almost right for the community to enforce the farmer to perform. One is the eradication of thistles. A careless husbandman who allows these weeds to grow up and seed so that the down is blown over all the neighbouring fields, entails so much labour and expense upon those who have the misfortune to have land near him, that his neglect amounts almost to a crime. So, too, with the charlock. It has been established beyond the possibility of a doubt that this noxious weed can be got rid of by spraying, yet, at the time its yellow flower comes out, it can be seen that there are very many people who will not go to the trouble and expense of destroying it. In such a case it would not be amiss to make represen-

tations on the subject at this time of the year, so as to stimulate the activity of the negligent tenant. In these days when science has come so much to the rescue of the farmer, it seems little short of absurd that prompt measures should not be taken for getting rid of charlock. We remember years ago when there was no other way of doing so than by the employment of a band of women, who, when the yellow flowers opened, were sent out to pull it up by the roots. This was expensive and troublesome, and in addition was very destructive, as, of course, the workers had to travel over the young corn to get at the weeds.

A PLAGUE OF RATS.

For some considerable time past the farmers of France have been very much troubled by a plague of field-rats very similar to that of voles which occurred about ten years ago in Scotland. Many were the devices used to get rid of them, but in vain, till, at the last meeting of the National Society of Agriculture, it was announced that the secretary had received from various districts, which had suffered much from the invasion of the rats, very good news indeed. In the Deux-Sèvres, la Vienne, les Charentes, where the destruction had been most terrible, the rodents had almost completely disappeared. In the neighbourhood of Reims, and in that of the Haute-Marne, there are not sufficient left to cause any annoyance. M. Sagnier had foretold this some months ago, when he said, "We shall see this terrible invasion of rats disappear naturally one day or another without knowing exactly why. As in the past rats have disappeared after periodical invasions which have alarmed farmers in the highest degree." It would appear that a kind of infectious disease had broken out amongst them, and it is a curious coincidence that two well-known scientists had already prepared a culture of microbes which if applied would have helped Nature to get rid of the rats. M. Hitier, in his account in the *Journal d'Agriculture Pratique*, from which we have taken these particulars, says, "Nevertheless, there still remain some obscure points in this sudden appearance, and equally sudden disappearance, of the rats. Why should they appear at a given moment in so great numbers at certain points? Without doubt in consequence of there having been a series of years favourable to their development, with dryness, absence of rain and of snow, abundant food. Then the inverse of these causes, the prolonged rain and absence of food, places them in a bad hygienic condition, and they then more easily fall a prey to the microbes."

METEOROLOGY.

A notice has been issued from the Meteorological Office that, as before, weather forecasts will be issued during the harvest season to persons desirous of receiving them upon payment of the cost of the telegrams. The forecast will be so worded that the cost of each message will be sixpence for any one district, including an address of three words. If the address exceeds three words, an addition of a halfpenny for each additional word must be made to the cost of the original telegram. This is a welcome announcement, but we trust that something more remains behind. These forecasts might surely be made much better than they are at present if it were arranged for a proper system of Marconigrams to be despatched to the office, and they would be as useful to the farmer during haytime as during the actual harvest. We see that the harvest forecasts are prepared at 3.30 p.m. daily, from June 1st to September 30th, except Sundays, and are applicable to the twenty-four hours from midnight following the time of issue. Undoubtedly these systems of forecasting have been very much improved during recent years, but one complaint is very often heard, viz., that though the weather prophesied scarcely ever fails to come, it is often a little later or a little earlier than was expected. By a more thorough use of wireless telegraphy it surely might be possible to get rid of this fault. Suppose he is about to cut his hay, or to lead it home, how



H. G. Stollard.

AN OFF DAY.

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FOUNDATION STOCK.

useful it would be to know when he got up in the morning exactly what the weather is likely to be, so that he might hasten or delay according to the news.

THE HIGHLAND CEILIDH.

I HAVE often heard people ask, as they left the Highlands behind after touring through its austere solitudes under summer skies, How do the people live there in winter? If tedium there be, it is in the daytime; but days are short, and many little duties fill them, perhaps a game of camanchd. With the fall of the night, the Gael turns to his simple pleasures. There is no lock in the Highlander's house. You are always welcome. The winter nights are given up to a ceaseless visitation, enjoyed by hosts and guests. To-night, perhaps, you are at Donald Rhua's, to-morrow you will be at Rob Donn's, next night you may make a round of calls. Or perhaps you go to a big waulking to see the girls home safely, or to a dance at a neighbouring farm. In whatever way, the night is occupied pleasantly. Small excitements, it may be said; and yet not so trivial after all, when you consider that they are sincere and leave behind no sensation of satiety.

The great function of the winter nights is the ceilidh. Time was when this was almost purely a literary gathering. There were two factors in the making and preservation of Highland literature. One was the summer sheiling, where the idyllic life and unrestrained intercourse gave birth to the love song. The other was the ceilidh, at which the old heroic tales were repeated and passed from memory to memory, and where, doubtless, new stories were invented. By the Highlanders both institutions were regarded with an almost passionate affection. The sheiling—that ideal of country life—is now, alas, little more than a memory enshrined in many a beautiful song, though something bearing a faint resemblance to the old splendid reality still exists in the isles. The ceilidh has also undergone a change, but it is still the chief and most delightful entertainment of the winter evenings, for it gratifies the Gael's love of story-telling. In earlier days, the ceilidh had almost a ceremonial character. Every township had one or more story-tellers or reciters, each with his own distinctive gift. One was a narrator of the old romances, another a historian, another a reciter of poetry, another an authority on song. Thus every taste was met. These story-tellers, etc., were the public library, and, though everything was good enough for the Gael so long as it had the interest of life and wonder, then, as now, romance was the favourite.

You may imagine what these ceilidhs were. The little room, lit only by the glow of the peat fire in the middle of the floor, the gnarled figures of the aged crofters, the fresh faces of the young—a scene to which only Rembrandt could do justice. There is a charming description of a ceilidh in Mr. Alexander Carmichael's "Carmina Gadelica." "The houseman," writes Mr. Carmichael, "is twisting twigs of heather into ropes to hold down thatch, a neighbour crofter is twining quicken rods into cords

to tie cows, while another is plaiting bent grass into baskets to hold meal.

'Eat bread and twist bent,
And thou this year shalt be as thou wert last.'

The housewife is spinning, a daughter is carding, another daughter is teasing, while a third daughter, supposed to be working, is away in the background conversing in low whispers with the son of a neighbouring crofter. Neighbour wives and neighbour daughters are knitting, sewing, or embroidering. The conversation is general: the local news, the weather, the price of cattle; these leading up to higher themes—the clearing of the glens (a sore subject), the war, Parliament, the effects of the sun upon the earth, and the moon upon the tides. The speaker is eagerly listened to, and is urged to tell more. But he pleads that he came to hear and not to speak, saying:

'The first story from the host,
Story till day from the guest.'

The stranger asks the houseman to tell a story, and after a pause the man complies. . . . When the story is ended it is discussed and commented upon, and the different characters praised or blamed according to their merits and the views of the critics. If not late, proverbs, riddles, conundrums, and songs follow. Some of the tales, however, are long, occupying a night or even several nights in recital. 'Sgeul Coise Cein,' for example, was in twenty-four parts, each part occupying a night in telling."

The feats of memory performed by these monarchs of the ceilidh were often prodigious. It was through them that the old literature of the Highlands was handed down from generation to generation. In his "Popular Tales," Campbell mentions a fisherman, seventy-nine years of age, who could relate versions of all the stories in his collection. Another could repeat four-score stories. One recent collector tells of a South Uist crofter, with whom died what would fill several volumes of old lore, mostly heroic tales. Campbell of Islay, Hector Maclean, and Mr. Alexander Carmichael took down many tales from a Barvas story-teller, but they made little impression on his abundant store. The Celt is still long-memory. The late Mary Macpherson, the Skye poetess, was unable to write, yet she remembered all her compositions till late in life, and then dictated a good-sized volume of them to a friend for publication. But nowadays, unhappily, the memory of the Gael is not exercised upon the old tales; it broods rather upon ancient wrongs and present bitternesses.

Though the ceilidh has lost most of its literary value, it is not the less an important social function. The subjects of talk and discussion have changed; that is all. There is no less zest in ceilidhing, there is no less interest in stories and the exchange of views. There is still one or more houses in every township where the ceilidh has a special character and is specially pleasant to attend. Everywhere, nowadays, the chief topics are those of current interest; but the story-teller who keeps his audience till the morning hours is he who knows all there is to know of the mysteries of second sight, of ghosts, and the things of the Fourth Dimension, which is now, as it always has been, a large part of Highland life.



THE SHEEP OF OUR FOREFATHERS.

*B. C. Wickison.**NATURE'S GARDEN.*

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ON LUNDY ISLE.—I.

RATHER more than twenty miles from the bar over which Torridge and Taw pour their mingled waters into the ocean, lying slantwise athwart the racing tides of the Bristol Channel, the island of Lundy appears to the landsman at times so close, that details of its sparkling granite cliffs, the church, and old disused lighthouse tower may readily be discerned, at others receding from view till it looms dim and mysterious like a cloud-bank on the horizon. Now it smiles in the sunlight, now frowns under the temporary shadow of some dark storm-cloud, ever changing in its effects, yet ever affording indication of the weather to those who understand. Nowadays, however, the wise in Nature's lore, to whom each sight and sound conveys its meaning, are not the many, and to most Lundy remains a name on the map, a dot on the horizon.

The sailor, indeed, cannot afford to treat Lundy as lightly as the landsman and tourist are wont to do, critically regarding its effects of distance and colour, or rapidly glancing in its direction so as to include it in a list of "things they have seen." To the sailor it is an ever-present reality—a friend or a foe. Rising sheer from the Atlantic, with but one pretence at a beach at its south-east corner, its cliffs frown inhospitably upon craft of all kinds, while at each end sharp-toothed rocks reach out for those who fail to give the island a sufficiently wide berth. Few captains would fall short in this respect in fair weather, but it is when completely shrouded in mist, and the winds are too light to prevent the ships from being carried out of their course by the strong tides, that Lundy is most to be feared. Then it is that she claims her victims, despite the powerful lights, the warning shrieks of the sirens, and reverberating thunder of the gun-signals.

From Lundy itself these fogs often present a curious spectacle, for they not uncommonly lie so low on the water that the top of the island is entirely free, bathed in sunshine, and one may look across to the mainland over a sea of closely-packed mist, resembling nothing so much as cotton-wool. Twenty miles away the summits of the higher cliffs are plainly to be seen, and, lying on the white surface of the fog, in the strongest contrast, the black smoke of steamers marks as though on a chart the tracks of invisible ships, crossing and recrossing in curious design. Here and there the masts and topsails of some tall ship pierce the mantle of fog, and it frequently happens that those on deck, anxiously awaiting a lifting of the mist to discover their position, may gain the knowledge at once by climbing into the shrouds.



A. J. R. Roberts.

A GROUP OF PUFFINS.

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During the frequent gales from the south-west, however, Lundy often proves a friend in need, forming as it does a vast natural breakwater nearly four miles long and 500ft. high. Ship after ship comes plunging in from every quarter, to ride easily at anchor in the shelter of her lee, until, if the rough weather last many days, there is quite a little forest of masts in the usually deserted roadstead, and in the blackness of the night the twinkling lights at masthead or side remind one of a small, sleeping town, in quiet contrast to the fury of the storm. But on the west side the battle of the elements rages with untamable fury. Long, majestic billows roll in from the Atlantic, dash on the granite cliffs, leap, as it were, bodily into the air, and then, shivered into froth and spray, sink back, leaving the rocks, grim and immovable as ever, to withstand the next onslaught of the ocean's cavalry. At the south end, the island is of a far more yielding nature. Slaty shale, treacherous to climb upon, is the legitimate prey of the waves, and seldom a winter passes in which some storm does not cause an avalanche of hundreds of tons of rock and earth, and leave a fresh scar, drawn as by some giant's finger, down the face of the cliff.

The only regular communication with the island is by a fishing skiff, which sails weekly from Instow, carrying the mails and such provisions as the islanders may require. The skipper, who has been making the journey for some thirty years, and asserts that he could "feel his way across by the shape of the waves," has a rare supply of yarns to while away the hours of passage, varying as they do from two and a-half to eight or even ten, according to the wind or lack of it. My first passage will ever remain fresh in my memory. It was in June, and we were feeling our way across through a thick fog, guided mainly by the flight of the sea-birds, whose sense of direction seems never at fault. The nesting season was in full swing, and, learning that I hoped to gain my first experience of cliff-climbing and to photograph the birds on their nests, the captain regaled me with tale after tale of those who had lost their lives there while engaged on somewhat similar pursuits, ceasing only when the journey came to an end.

With what romance the little rock-bound island was clothed in my mind, and how impatiently I longed to explore its wonders! But all was wrapped in fog. From the shore one could not see the top of the cliffs, and a drenching rain soon saturated any portion of my clothing that the waves had failed to reach. I had



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FROTH, ROCKS, AND SPRAY.

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perforce to cool my heels, and devote myself to the prosaic task of seeking a lodging and a change of clothes. The following day was as fair as its predecessor had been foul, and I rushed off to the sea-bird nursery at the north end, as indifferent to everything but birds as only a young and inexperienced ornithologist can be. Since that day, however, almost every stock and stone on the island have long become familiar, and there is much, indeed, that is worthy of the attention.

Lundy is, roughly speaking, a triangular table-land, with its apex towards the north, and, as will readily be understood, its western coast, exposed to the full force of the Atlantic, is far more precipitous and romantic than the eastern. Here the actual cliffs are only some 150ft. high, the additional 300ft. being gained by steep slopes, locally known as the "Sidings" or "Sidelands," where alone vegetation may be said to flourish. The wind-swept summit boasts a short, close, springy turf, and where Nature has free play, a stubby heather and stunted gorse, uniting, in September, to produce the richest effects of colouring, with the honeysuckle, which, having nothing to climb upon, spreads itself along the ground, and, in its season, forms a carpet of flowers.

Immediately one steps over the edge, as it were, on to the Sidelands, a luxuriant growth of bracken and ferns of all kinds (notably the *Osmunda*) conspires with long trailing brambles to make a passage almost impossible. Especially is this the case in the valleys, where small streams have cut deep courses and left curious pillars of earth, some 18in. in diameter and 4ft. or 5ft. high, bound fast by roots, and crowned by tufts of long, coarse grass. The intervening spaces are, as often as not, covered by brambles, and a single incautious step on these shaking footholds results in the sudden and total eclipse of the person who makes it. *Crede experto!*

Three rough walls, known respectively as Quarter, Halfway, and Three-quarter Walls, divide the island into more or less equal parts. The southernmost alone is cultivated, and with the exception of an inhabited cottage just beyond the Quarter Wall, and the Light-keepers' at the north end, contains the whole population of the island, some thirty or thirty-five people all told. On the very highest ground stands the old lighthouse tower,



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which, on account of its great height above the sea, proved useless in foggy weather, and in almost equal relief against the sky-line is the new church, a handsome building of Lundy granite. In a slight hollow the farmhouse, labourers' cottages, and a number of outhouses cluster together to escape the wind, while immediately below, in the most sheltered gorge of all, the squire's comfortable house seeks, as far as possible, to retire from view.

At the south end of the island, too, are the Devil's Limekiln and Shutter Rock. The former is a curious funnel-shaped chasm some 50ft. across at the mouth, but rapidly narrowing to half that distance, which pierces the island like the shaft of a mine for 250ft. or 300ft., when it is connected by a tunnel with the sea. The Shutter Rock, chosen by Kingsley as the scene of the wreck of Don Guzman's galleon, which thus escaped Amyas Leigh's vengeance, is, very roughly, the shape



LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULLS' NEST.

of a cone, and, by an immense stretch of the imagination, might be supposed to fit into the Limekiln—whence its name. The devil must have been astonishingly busy in the West of England in the old days, judging by the number of objects which bear his name, and, though everyone would suppose that the Limekiln was formed by the action of the sea, the true explanation is that it was one of the entrances to the lower regions, and that, being surprised one day while descending, the devil, in his hurry, forgot to replace the Shutter Rock, which was, of course, the trapdoor. So the passage has remained open ever since, and that is why many people will not venture near it at night.

Perhaps the most curious rock of all is the Knight Templar, which bears so startling a resemblance to the head of a man that it is difficult to resist the idea that Nature's freak has been embellished by the chisel. It is situated on the east side, just beyond the Halfway Wall, and on the near side of the wall was a fine example of a logging stone, now spoilt by the too successful efforts of some tourist to overbalance it. This, too, presents a fantastic caricature of a face, so that visitors often mistake it for the Templar, and return wondering why such a fuss has been made over the likeness.

As you proceed northward the coast becomes grander, more rugged, and precipitous. There are, perhaps, few cliffs that attract special notice by reason of their peculiar shape; and, romantic as the scenery is, the attention of most people is absorbed by the vast quantities of sea-birds which claim the north end of the island for their own, and invest it with a peculiar charm. The visitor sees, perhaps for the first time, a sea-bird nursery—birdland's most impressive sight in Nature's most impressive setting—and, if he have a cool head and sure foot, he could scarcely desire a better place to study its inmates. For the cliffs are granite, and one may trust one's life with confidence to almost every ledge where finger or toe can find a hold. One can descend with ease, and sit perched on some ledge halfway down the cliff in the midst of a large colony of kittiwakes, guillemots, and razorbills, and watch the birds coming and going about their daily affairs, absolutely indifferent to the unwonted intrusion. In some places, of course, a descent is only possible with the aid of a rope, and one can enjoy a mild form of

mountaineering, which adds a spice of excitement to the work, and makes it perhaps the most fascinating department of the study of bird-life. But the bird-life of Lundy demands a paper to itself, for it is undoubtedly the best sea-bird breeding station to be found in the South, and probably in the whole of England.

A. J. R. ROBERTS.

THE SWALLOW.

ALTHOUGH it is not associated with so many curious legends as the cuckoo, *Hirundo rustica*, the common or chimney swallow, is a universal favourite, welcomed wherever it appears; and, while both praise and blame are lavished upon the cuckoo, nobody has a bad word to say for this pretty spring guest, the most familiar and graceful of all the swallow tribe. Like the robin and wren, it is looked upon as a sacred bird, either because it is the harbinger of summer, or because, owing to its familiarity with man and its fancy for building near human habitations, it was dedicated long ago to the Penates, or household deities, and, consequently, it was thought most unlucky to kill it, or destroy its nest or eggs, a belief which lingers in Essex:

"The robin with the red breast,
The martin and the swallow,
If ye touch one o' their eggs,
Bad luck will surely follow."

Dryden refers to a similar superstition:

"Perhaps you failed in your foreseeing skill,
For swallows are unlucky birds to kill."

It is thought especially fortunate if the birds select a new house, or one where a young married couple have just set up housekeeping, and "the more birds the better luck," according to an old proverb. In some parts of the country it is said that swallows and martins will not build where there is strife and quarrelling, and if they forsake a house where they have been in the habit of returning, season after season, the inmates may expect some dire misfortune.

In Scandinavia, where it is very popular, it is said to owe its name to the fact that through all the hours of our Lord's Passion it hovered over the Cross, crying mournfully, "Svala! Svala!" (Console! Console!), hence it is known as "the bird of consolation," and is looked upon as a blessed creature whom it is unlucky to injure, while to tear down its nest is supposed to bring some great disaster upon the house. So anxious are the Scandinavians that swallows and martins should build on their dwellings, that they hang pieces of bark under the eaves to induce the birds to nest there. There was an old superstition that the swallow brought a certain stone from the seashore, which gave sight to its young, as Longfellow says in "Evangeline":

"Seeking with eager eyes that wondrous stone
which the swallow
Brings from the shore of the sea to restore the
sight of its fledgelings."

Another version was that the bird used the celandine, or "swallow-wort," for the purpose. The name comes from the Greek "chelidon" (a swallow), because it was supposed to bloom and fade with the arrival and departure of our little friend, just as we have "cuckoo-flowers" and "nightingale's bells" (wild hyacinth) for a similar reason. Culpeper says, with regard to this plant: "They say that if you put out the eyes of young swallows when they are in the nest, the old ones will recover them again with this herb." Pliny seems to have held the same idea, and unfortunately this odd notion caused people to drop the acrid poisonous juice into the eyes of persons suffering from ophthalmia, frequently blinding them permanently.

The coming of the swallow takes place about the middle of April, and he is looked upon as the herald of spring and fine weather; there is a widely-spread belief that there is never any severe cold after the swallows have appeared. In many parts of

Europe a festival was held when the first of the graceful birds appeared after its winter sojourn in Asia or Northern Africa or the extreme South of Europe, for swallows pass from Iceland and Lapland to Greece, Asia Minor, and Egypt, and from the extreme North of America to the warm regions of that great continent, with the change of the seasons.

Long centuries ago "the swallow-boys" of Rhodes carried one of the birds from door to door, singing carols to usher in the spring, as Longfellow tells us in "Hyperion":

"The swallow is come!
The swallow is come!
Oh! fair are the seasons, and light
Are the days that she brings,
With her dusky wings,
And her bosom snowy white."

In many parts of Germany the stork is greeted in similar fashion, and in some districts children carry round either a live



A. J. R. Roberts. GUILLEMOTS RESTING ON STACK ROCK.

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swallow or one carved in wood to celebrate the approach of summer. In the North of Albania, where March 1st is the beginning of the year, the cows are decked with garlands on this day, and grown-up people wear a knot of red silk on the little finger of the right hand, while threads of many gay hues are tied upon the wrists and necks of the children, and not removed till the first swallow appears, when they are taken off and hung on rose bushes, so that the birds may use them for their nests. In Eastern lands, where it is known as "the bird of God," the swallow is regarded with reverence, though in India, Java, and China the young ones are eaten. The edible birds' nests, so prized in China, belong to a small species of swallow, about the size of the common martin. The greater number of the nests are

brought from Java, where they are built in crevices of the rocks and caves. It is a task of great danger and difficulty to collect them, and the men who engage in it offer sacrifice, pray, and burn incense in honour of a female deity, who is supposed to inhabit the caves, and protect those who thus propitiate her. The men are lowered by ropes or bamboo ladders into the dangerous caverns where the curious nests line the rocky walls, while the sea foams and rages below. The most famous of these is in the Island of Java, but the bird frequents marine caves in many parts of the Indian Archipelago. Besides this *Colocalia esculenta*, three other species of swallows build edible nests, which vary greatly in value, the new white nests being literally worth their weight in gold, while those in which a brood has been reared are comparatively cheap.

Our common swallow is seen during the summer in most parts of the Northern Hemisphere. It is one of the handsomest of the tribe, with its glossy plumage of black, blue, and white, and the chestnut patch on throat and forehead. It is distinguished from other species by the peculiar length of the feathers at either side of the forked tail. Living entirely on insects, and seeking its food on the wing, it is noted for the swiftness of its flight, and is a most valuable bird to the farmer and gardener. The nests are built of mud, lined with grass, straw, or feathers, and contain four to six eggs of a whitish hue, clouded with grey, and spotted with minute reddish brown dots. The old naturalists seem to have believed that swallows did not migrate, but remained with us during the winter in a torpid state, in holes, hollow trees, or buried under the mud of rivers and ponds. Isaac Walton held the theory, and even White seemed to have some faith in the tale. Doubtless some birds, who are not sufficiently strong to start on the long flight across the seas, may hide themselves, and perhaps live through a mild winter, and it seems to be true that many of the birds have been discovered in a semi-comatose state in hollow trees during cold weather, and have revived when brought into a warm room; but how close observers, who watched the birds gathering year by year for their flight, could have doubted that they migrated is a mystery.

If a swallow falls down the chimney of a house, it is said to be a death warning, an idea which has come down from the ancients, for when a flight of these birds lighted on the mast of Anthony's ship, as he sailed into Egypt, the soothsayers prophesied that he should be slain in that land.

The pretty martin, known by its patch of white on the tail-coverts, builds, like the swallow, in the eaves of houses, and its choice of a building-place is supposed to show that the air is fresh and wholesome, a superstition quoted by Shakespeare:

"This guest of summer,
The temple-haunting martlet, does approve
By his lov'd mansionry, that the heaven's breath
Smells wooingly here: no jutty, frieze, buttress,
No coigne of vantage, but this bird hath made
His pendant bed and procreant cradle: where they
Most breed and haunt, I have observed, the air
Is delicate."

The lively little sand-martin arrives about the same time as the house-martin and swallow, but can scarcely be said to make

a nest, merely boring holes in banks and cliffs, at the bottom of which it places a careless bundle of some soft material, on which it lays four or five fragile greyish white eggs.

Last of all comes the swift, in its sober plumage of black and grey. It is also the first to leave, for it cannot bear cold. Like the swallow, it is insectivorous, and is remarkable for the rapidity of its flight, to which it owes its name. It builds a rough nest, of straw, hay, and wool, fastened together by a glutinous substance, and placed in holes or crevices in rocks, walls, steeples, or roofs, being particularly fond of thatched ones. In Scandinavia it builds in hollow trees. It lays two or three white eggs, and rarely rears more than one brood. The shrill note has gained it the name of "screech-martin." Under the name of "martlet," the martin has figured largely in heraldry, as the swallow has under its French title of "hirondelle." It is usually blazoned without legs, and we find the following explanation in Guillim's "Display of Heraldry":

"The martlet hath legs so exceeding short, that they can by no means do so. And if perchance they fall upon the ground, they cannot raise themselves upon their feet, as others do, and so prepare themselves for flight. For this cause they are accustomed to make their nests upon rocks, and other high places, from whence they may easily take their flight, from the support of the air. Hereupon it came that this bird is painted in arms without feet: and for this cause it is also given for a difference of younger brethren, to put them in mind to trust to their wings of virtue and merit, and to raise themselves, and not in their legs, having no land to put their foot on."

Many poets have sung of the martin and swallow, from the Elizabethan writers down to Tennyson, with his:

"O swallow, swallow, flying flying South,"
and Austin Dobson's:

"HIRUNDO.
"By shore and sea I come and go,
To seek I know not what; and lo!
On no man's eaves I sit.
But voices bid me rise once more,
To flit again by sea and shore—
Flit! flit!"

Indeed, it is no wonder that the swift-winged, restless birds have appealed alike to the poet and the painter and those possessed by "Der Wander-lust"—that longing to fly with the swallows to other lands, the strange craving said in Celtic myth to come upon those who tread upon the mystic "Wandering grass."

MAUD E. SARGENT.

A TWEED SALMON.

ON Tweed—"Royal Tweed," as Mr. Stoddart called it—the fisherman feels he is on classic ground; for nearly every pool and brae along its course has a place in ballad or legend, and the very reach on which the accompanying photographs were taken, Craig Pool (or locally Craigo'er), is reputed to have been the spot where Michael Scot, the wizard, chased ashore a devil whom he had conjured up, but which refused to do his bidding. This pool is on the Mertoun stretch, whose owner, Lord Polwarth,

firm in his belief in the homing instinct of salmon, has, as far as we know, been the only riparian owner who for years has been turning in annually thousands of young salmon; so it must add considerably to his pleasure, in capturing a fish in his water, to reflect that it may be one of his own breeding.

Craigover Pool, too, is the scene of the iniquitous "sunning" so graphically and unblushingly described by Scrope, and there many a time must have flashed

"... the blood red gleam
Over the midnight slaughter"

when the poachers were "burning the water." Unfortunately, these traditions of leister, cleek, and net have been handed down so persistently from generation to generation of the dwellers on its banks that the taint of poaching seems to be ineradicable. Nevertheless, the high rents obtained on this noble river would have astonished John Haliburton, farmer, who at the beginning of the last century "rented the Mertoun angling for £15 a year, with a cow's grass."

Tweed has a record of mighty fish that stirs the fisherman's pulse as he puts his rod together, some four, 50lb. and upwards, having been caught on fly within the last thirty years, Mr. Pryor's salmon on the Makerstoun Reach in 1886 topping the list. This fish was weighed in the presence of three witnesses at 60lb., and, though next



Lady Nina Balfour.

GIVING HIM THE BUTT.

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Lady Nina Balfour.

SAFE ASHORE.

morning it could not pull more than 57½ lb., there is little reason to doubt it was above the latter weight.

The photographs given show the final stages of a good fight with a 14-pounder last autumn. After the nets are off gaffs are prohibited—a very good thing on a river where, as an old Peeblesshire keeper was wont to say, “except himself and his maister he dooted if there was a man in the parish who wadna cleek a fush if he got the chance”—so the huge landing-net has to be used, an awkward implement in unskilled hands when fish run big. In this case the gillie has made no mistake, and the last photograph shows the clean-run salmon hanging a “shaft of living silver,” as his weight is noted.

It is impossible in writing of or visiting Tweedside to ignore the flagrant and open defiance of law that goes on there. Poaching appears to be in the very blood of the Border peasantry, and there is absolutely no public feeling against it. A man may be, and has been, imprisoned for “cleeking” salmon, and yet continue to hold with general approval his place as an elder of the kirk.

THE COUNTRY TOWN.

UNTIL the present time the country town has been as strikingly characteristic of the country as the villages and farms and fields; as stimulating to the fancy, as suggestive of the sturdy rural life of England, as inseparable from England's romantic history. Veritable town, it has had nothing of London about it, but has been town of the country-side of which it was the centre. Accordingly every town had its own character, invariably English, but always distinctive. Stretched out, as a rule, along some main road, but thickening round the market-place, for generations its interests were parochial, local. Its prosperity hung on the seasons; foreign wars concerned it less than the disputes at the vestry, or than the election, or the fair; and the corn crop, or the hops or fruit, mattered to it more than the price of Consols; and somehow, while the restricted but sufficient and simple life of the inhabitants impressed itself unconsciously upon the streets, the townsman as he traversed them breathed its influence unawares, and to this day one feels it. The customary High Street, glistening with reflected sunshine, has a charm beyond that which it derives constantly from the surrounding hills and valleys, and not dependent upon the fresh amplitude of air that enwraps the town so lovingly.

That the nearness of the open country contributes its effect, of course is true. Very pleasant it is, as you walk about the old town, to glance through a gap between the houses—down some alley or backway, or under the entrance to an inn-yard—and catch a glimpse of green hillside a mile away under a great vista of sky telling of far horizons. You look up; as likely as not a rook is sailing overhead. You listen; and if the street chances to be quiet you may hear a lark singing. From a street in my own native town I have watched a hawk poised high in air; one spring day I heard, and looking up caught sight of, a passing cuckoo. Many birds are near at hand. Thrushes and blackbirds are melodious in the back gardens, swallows build under the eaves, now and again a wagtail comes down into the roadway. The summer evenings are vocal with the screaming of swifts; in the summer mornings, if you are up early enough, you may see rooks coolly walking in the streets as though they owned them. Pleasant odours come, too; there are hours in June when the town is fragrant with the scent of new hay, though you do not see the meadows where it is making. The passing manure waggon is at worst only half disagreeable, because, after all, it makes you think of farms, and another day it may bring in for atonement the scent of hops, or of the newly-opened heap of mangold. The occasional odour of weeds

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burning is far from offensive in the street; nor was it at one time offensive, I remember, but rather suggestive of leagues of hot summer weather, when for several days a whole town was perfumed with the penetrating smell of a vast heath fire six or seven miles away. But besides these chance reminders of rusticity there is always the sky, there are always the clouds, and the sense of plentiful breathing-room above and around the country town. As you perceive, the shops and dwelling-houses are but a thin screen, a flimsy and often beautiful scene-painting, hiding the open country but not really shutting it out. Rather they frame the sky, and set the imagination dreaming of the fields over which it broods; and while they shut out the eyesores—the neglected farm, the squalid village, or the obtrusively



Lady Nina Balfour.

A BONNIE “FUSH.”

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new cockney villas that too often disfigure the actual country—on the other hand they invite thoughts of the real beauty that lies beyond them. From out there behind the houses and across the valleys comes fancy of coppices full of primroses, hangers fringed with catkins, woodland hollows still open to the April sky, but soon to be curtained in with young leaves. There were never lovelier hedgerows, deeper meadows, more ample downs, or farms more peaceful than those one is tempted to imagine from the High Street of a country town.

But delicious though all this may be, the street means more than this, and deserves to be looked upon affectionately for its own sake as a feature of the former English country-side. For

the old towns—Salisbury and Basingstoke, Lewes, Dunstable, and the hundreds of others whose very names are inspiring—were not in their origin places where rural life ceased; they were the places where it grew tense and vital, and they stand now as a sort of ancient monuments, more interesting than Stonehenge or Old Sarum, of a past dear to every lover of the country. You feel the strong, compelling influence if you merely pass through them as a stranger. If you are a native of one of them, and know it well, the steadfast houses and the turnings of the streets seem to add to your personal memory recollections from times long before your own, and every memory of them all smacks not of town but of country. The staid Queen Anne houses—upon what a comely, old-fashioned life have they stood looking down! It is to a "Vicar of Wakefield's" England that they refer you, and they seem still dreaming of glowing summer afternoons and of the hearty farmers they have seen coming into the town for the market. The cumbersome road-waggons rumble by, and the stage-coaches bringing news, and without thinking of it one's spirit is stirred by the sentiment of the great roads. The meaner Georgian and Early Victorian houses and house fronts are not less richly communicative. Those who built them knew more of the country than we do; they opened their queer old shops, and bought their goods, and tuned their behaviour, with an eye to rural taste—the taste of farmers and yeomen and villagers—and knew nothing of the demands that reach us now from London suburbs. London was not so much in that strenuous era, and the country was more than in our time, and as the rural world gloried over Waterloo, and was agonised by the bitter price of poverty which it cost, and struggled with its Poor Laws and Corn Laws and tithes, and was at once most mean and most heroic, the country towns received the impress of its honest, artless character, and retain it now for those to venerate who understand.

At last, however, a great change is coming over the country town, and it is losing its character by reason of the changes progressing all round it. As was calmly stated the other day in the notice of a forthcoming book on the architecture of "country cottages" (meaning "week-end" villas and the like), residents hailing from town are beginning to oust the former population of the land, and already in our High Streets one sees the result. The old individual character is going, something aped from the Bon Marché at Brixton is coming instead; the towns begin to resemble one another, and are as countrified as Wimbledon or Blackheath. And so, too, the character of the townsman is changing—he knows little more of the country than his new customers, and, like them, looks to London for his ideal. The very traffic of the streets betrays a subtle alteration, with the old homeliness disappearing and a flashy smartness taking its place.

The change, however, has not yet gone so far, but one may still see samples, and many of them, of the life that made our country towns so picturesque, and has left them so impressive. There are the weekly markets, in themselves a subject for many papers such as this; and, better still, there are the folk who come in to the markets. But leaving all these aside, many things of ordinary occurrence still mark the old towns as deserving the epithet "country." At the present time of year, the spoils of

the coppices make their appearance in the streets. I do not mean particularly—though they are significant and touching—the tight and drooping little nosegays of primroses and daisies which the school-children bring as offerings to their teachers, but I am thinking rather of certain saleable commodities that are evidence of woodland industries in the neighbourhood. A cart slowly creeps along the street, stopping here and there to deliver bundles of peasticks for town gardens; another is bringing the long limp strips of waste from hoop-making, good for kindling fires. I

saw, only to-day, a diminutive and ramshackle old van, in which lay a score or two of ash poles forked at the top, for props to clothes-lines. These were being hawked from door to door by two women, who also had strings of clean new clothes-pegs to offer to their customers. A young loutish man was minding the shaggy horse—a man as shiftily-looking as the women who were conducting the business; and, though the name on their vehicle was illegible, anyone who knew the district might guess tolerably well from what remote woodland quarter these folk had ventured in, making just that shy use of the town that their poaching, smuggling, but seldom hard-working forefathers had been wont to make generations ago. At this time of year, too, the pink stalks of rhubarb are pleasantly conspicuous in the donkey-carts by which village gardeners convey their vegetables to the townspeople.

Other seasons, of course, are marked by the passage of other country products. Cart-loads of green rye, great waggons piled up with the new hay, loads of corn, timber on creaking carriages, hops (in my native town), and waggon-loads of village hop-pickers; but it seems untimely to speak of such things in the spring. Always, however, there are the milk-carts from outlying farms, the flour-vans and huge horses belonging to well-known and prosperous mills, the red ware from local potteries, and so on, coming into the town; and, going out of it, the farm implements, the oil-cake, the coal and coke, the deal boards, the grains that farmers have need of, and the hundred odds and ends distributed over the district by the recognised carriers. These things are visible, almost as of old, to show how essential a part of rural life the rural town has been, and must be still, though the changes going on all around it should half obliterate its time-honoured character. Here the harness-maker will continue to thrive, long after motor-traction has ruined him in London; and in quiet side-streets there will still be audible here the chinking hammerings from some smithy or shoeing forge, not quite forgetful of its earlier prosperity when the country was still country. That the ostler in the hotel yard will wear such an unsophisticated rustic smile as the fellow had whom I saw the other day is, perhaps, too much to hope. Perhaps he may—who knows? To consider that and cognate questions, one may profitably pause and examine the bills in the auctioneer's window, observing whether they advertise "desirable freehold building sites" too numerous, or whether the announcements of wool sales, farms to let, and auctions of underwood and poles still hold their own.

GEORGE BOURNE.

AN IMPERIAL BISON PRESERVE.

WE give this week two excellent views of the extensive hunting park of Bielovierje in Lithuania, which is reserved for the sole use of His Imperial Majesty the Czar. Like most of the Imperial undertakings, it has been planned on a grand scale. It has a circumferential extent of about 160 miles, and contains a vast wealth of flora and fauna. Oaks of hoary age, and often



THE LARGEST WILD ANIMAL IN EUROPE.

reaching a height of 100 ft., spread over the rolling country, while pine trees of still greater height crowd in serried ranks on the slopes and uplands of the domain. Big game in profusion awaits the skill of the hunter. Wild boar, roebuck, and elk roam through the glades; bears and wolves alone are no longer to be found, as by the Czar's express command these were exterminated some years ago. Here, in the silence of the forest, the Czar and the numerous members of his family are accustomed to find relaxation and freedom from the somewhat rigid

etiquette which surrounds the Court of this autocratic ruler. To enjoy the pleasures of the estate to full advantage, there has been erected during the present reign a magnificent *pied-à-terre* of 120 rooms, and scattered about in various parts of the forest many hunting lodges are to be found. To enable the Imperial party to readily reach their quarters, a branch railway has been carried into the heart of the estate from the nearest main line. Every facility for travel has, indeed, been provided, as the Czarina rarely fails to accompany her Imperial husband. A magnificent *chaussée* extends along the main axis of the forest.

The Czar and Czarina alike, as, indeed, most of the members of the Imperial family, relax freely from their enforced formality, and are accustomed to treat retainers and peasants with *bonhomie* and to converse freely with them. The shooting parties are

will, within the confines of the wide-spreading preserve, at certain seasons of the year it is the practice to restrict their movements to certain defined areas. Thus in the late summer and autumn the herds are driven down to the swamps and marshland of the forest, which are covered with an almost tropical vegetation, and form an ideal retreat for the bison. In the winter they are driven to the higher and drier reaches and uplands of the territory.

The bison is the largest wild animal in Europe, the old bulls attaining a height of nearly 6ft. at the shoulder, a length of over 11ft., and a weight on the average of 13cwt. to 15cwt. They are rarely aggressive, except in the case of the very old bulls, which are rejected from the herd by the younger ones and roam about alone, frequently attacking both man and animals. They have remarkable strength, especially in the fore-quarters,



PREPARING TO CHARGE THE PHOTOGRAPHER.

invariably large, and, although nothing in the nature of a battue is practised, such as we are accustomed to in the limited acreage of our English coverts, the day's shoot generally yields a plentiful and well-earned bag of various classes of game, and the incident and excitement of the hunt are of an ever-changing character.

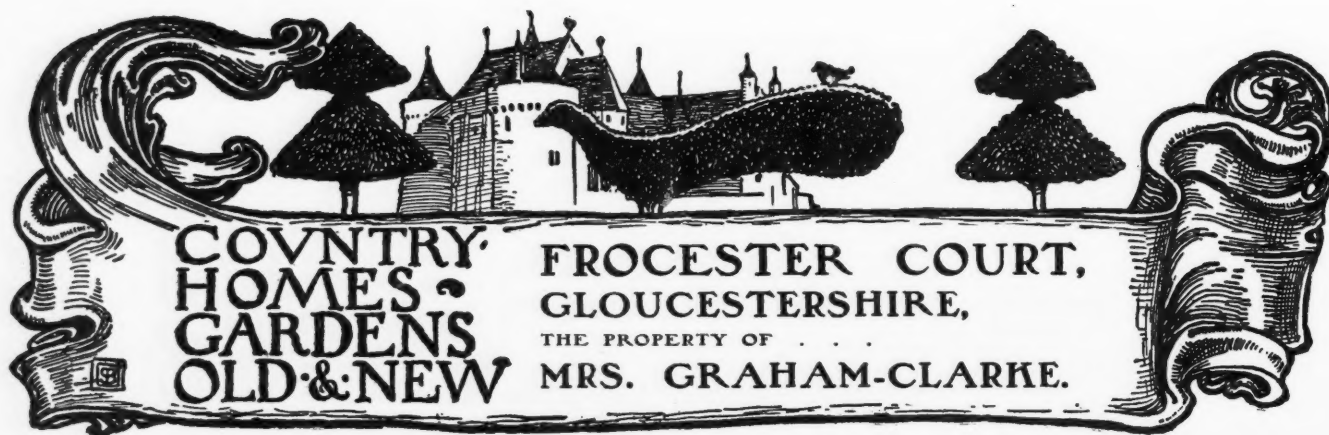
A special feature of this particular forest, and certainly its most interesting one, is the magnificent herd of bison, numbering not less than 1,200 head, the last remaining of its kind in Europe. The present Emperor Nicholas takes a personal and special interest in the preservation of this unique herd, and since his accession to the throne, some ten years ago, has placed its care in the hands of the Ministry of Domains, and by his order a stringent penalty has been attached to the killing of bison. The Emperor rigidly respects his own rule, and exacts compliance with it from the members of his family. An incident is related in connection with this rule which may interest our readers.

The Grand Duke Michael Alexandrovitch, brother to the Emperor and an enthusiastic sportsman, wandering alone, with only a single loader in attendance, suddenly encountered a fine specimen in a quiet glade of the forest. Unable to resist the temptation, he brought it down by a well-aimed shot, and then, reminded of his illegal action by the consternation of the attendant, promptly produced from his pocket a Rs.500 bill, the amount of the penalty, and sent it post haste to the head-ranger of the forest.

An army of keepers are employed in the supervision of the bison, and a yearly grant of £6,000 is apportioned by the Ministry of Domains for their upkeep. Their wants receive the closest attention, and although generally allowed to wander at

and easily break down the young saplings and undergrowth. They have no difficulty in repelling the attacks of both wolf and bear, rushing upon and crushing their assailants by trampling them under foot. Wolves, however, the most persistent of their enemies, hang around the herds, and continually attack and devour straying calves. Chiefly for this reason the extermination order to which we have already referred was issued, and a careful watch is maintained by the keepers to prevent the reappearance of the wolf within the borders of the domain.

The bison has never been domesticated by man, and even when taken young has been found most difficult to train, as it readily reverts, given the opportunity, to the wild state. Though naturally of shy habit, it is dangerous to approach; it is capable of considerable speed, but for short distances only. In spite of its marked aversion to the cow, it has, contrary to general belief, been found possible to successfully suckle the bison calf by the latter. It attains its full stature in its sixth year, and lives to about thirty or forty years. It has a peculiar cry, consisting of a deep grunt, having no resemblance to the lowing of an ox. Owing to its shyness, and the acuteness of its smell, it is most difficult to approach, and this can only be done with difficulty from the leeward. For this reason the present photographs were most difficult to obtain. The photographer concealed himself for several days in a charcoal-burner's hut before an opportunity offered to approach within a satisfactory distance. The photograph of the old bull was, indeed, taken under circumstances which might well have proved disastrous to the photographic enthusiast, as the attitude illustrated immediately preceded a charge at close quarters, from which he narrowly escaped.



WE have selected this old English house as typical of a large class, and all our readers will see that it represents the ancient dwelling-houses of a delightful region of England. Frocester Court is in Gloucestershire, two miles south-west of Stonehouse, and is one of many such places in that county and in Wiltshire, and in the whole country of the Cotswolds. It is built of the fine local stone, and has a quaint attractiveness that will commend itself to our readers. The charm rests upon it of the life of a bygone age, and it is pleasant to record that, though now a farmhouse, it is in good hands, and preserves the aspect of former times.

The old gateway of Frocester Court presents as picturesque an appearance as we could well desire. Its ornamental timber gable bridging the approach, contrasted with the fine stonework of the neighbouring buildings, is peculiarly satisfying to the artistic eye. Then, when we approach the porch, where the Japonica is in flower, something very quaint is discovered in the doorway, with its fine mouldings, the mullioned window over it, the gable, and the flanking buildings, with old windows and a buttress, all suggesting an early time. The house stands charmingly in that picturesque country which is famous for its woods, orchards, and dairy farms, and fine trees are its neighbours, while green things cling kindly to its old weather-worn stonework.

The parish lies in a valley, but on a slope facing the north, with a large hanging beech wood on the side towards Nympsfield, where the turnpike road leads from Bath to Gloucester. It

is said that the houses of the village formerly stood in the lower part of the parish near the church, but were burnt down, and that afterwards, to obtain a drier site, the inhabitants built them where they stand. Of this legend the truth cannot be shown, and it may be taken as one of those traditions which grow up about the origin of many old locations of men. The place was once part of the broad possessions of the Abbey of Gloucester, and the abbots had a sumptuous house in the manor, as well, it is said, as a cell for prebendaries. The site of the manor house and divers lands and possessions were granted in the first year of Queen Mary to Giles Huntley, by a member of whose family Frocester Court was built, the builder being George Huntley, who raised the house in Queen Mary's reign about the year 1554. It still possesses some fine old panelling carved with figures of Philip and Mary in a very curious fashion. When Queen Elizabeth was on her way to Berkeley Castle in 1574, she stayed at the manor house, and the room she occupied is still shown. Her visit was paid upon St. Lawrence's Day, as is recorded in the register of the parish, where it is said that she lodged on that night at the seat of George Huntley, Esquire, by whom she was elegantly and splendidly entertained. Sir Richard Huntley was knighted in 1603, but Sir Robert Ducie purchased the court-house and a large quantity of land in the parish.

The chronicler has little to tell us of the annals of this quaint old place, whose history must be read chiefly in its venerable features. The district is one in which stone is available, but in which wood was plentiful. Our ancestors loved the





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ENTRANCE TO FROCESTER COURT.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

picturesque effects attainable with the latter, and quaintness itself lives in the Frocester gatehouse. Looking at it, the mind is irresistibly drawn to conjure up pictures of the old-time life that went on within these walls, and their inmates, three centuries ago. Did the janitor, we wonder, look out from the windows of that gatehouse, or rather did not the waving kerchief of the lady speed the parting or welcome the approaching guest? Two ages seem to be represented in the manor house. What charm is in the grey stonework, and what character and dignity in the gables and chimneys and the mullioned windows of the old abode. The picturesque form of the manor house, with its lofty gables, fine chimney-stacks, and excellent windows, shows that it belongs to a good period of domestic construction. The stonework is as admirable as the craftsmanship in wood.

The ancient tithe-barn was erected by John de Gamage, Abbot of Gloucester, between 1287 and 1306, and is believed to be the largest in England, its length being over 300ft. The interior is of very beautiful workmanship, and the oak rafters are exceptionally fine. Barns of the class are extremely interesting, and are often constructed after the manner of churches, with naves and aisles. Hither were brought the tithes of the crops, to be stored for the conventual needs. Stout and strong were the beams, and we may plainly see that the men who built churches were also the builders of conventual and ancient tithe-barns. The plan and construction are often the same, and a nave and aisles,

with arcades of wood, often surprise those who are not familiar with such venerable buildings as the great tithe-barn of Frocester.

The church of St. Peter at Frocester, built mostly in the fifteenth century, stands a mile from the village. St. Andrew's Chapel of Ease, which anciently formed part of the buildings of Frocester Court, was removed to its present site between 1676 and 1691 by the gift of Ann, Dowager Baroness Brooke. It was restored by Sir Robert Ducie, Lord Mayor of London, and has since undergone alterations. There is one bell under a gable over the chancel arch with the inscription, "Come away, make no delay, 1719."

A fine view is gained from the top of Frocester Hill, for the district is very picturesque, lying as it does amongst the outliers of the Cotswold Hills. Mrs. Graham-Clarke is the lady of the manor, but this charming old house is at present occupied by Mr. Blackwell, who has done much to preserve its beauties.

When the monks were gone the time of the squire came, great in the hunting-field, from which he returned to his early afternoon dinner, bringing back with him other jovial Nimrods to join in the lengthy sitting over the table after it. Great farmers, too, some of these squires, skilled in the fattening of beeves, and in the natural capabilities of the acres they passed their whole lives on. For the average landowner rarely moved far from home in those days, nor did his wife and daughters. These old manor houses were little



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FROCESTER COURT.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

worlds within themselves, self-supplying, self-sufficing; and the outer world was unheeded and almost ignored. Is it not on record that it needed a strong personal appeal on the part of his Sovereign to induce a Cavalier squire to kennel up his hounds and fight for King and Church, so little had he realised the struggle that was convulsing the country at large? Those times are dead also, but such houses as Frocester Court happily remain to speak architecturally of them.

IN THE GARDEN.

MAY THOUGHTS.

AT the time of writing the garden is bathed in sunshine, tempered unfortunately with a keen easterly wind, which plays sad pranks among the tender shoots of the Rose and even of the more sturdy things, the Nut trees planted last year showing traces of the treacherous breeze. The gale of the previous week, accompanied with a sharp morning frost, brought disaster in its train, and we are much afraid a large planting of the beautiful white Philox, Mrs. E. H. Jenkins, has suffered too severely to show the wonderful mass of white which it was our pleasure to see last summer. It may be our good fortune even before these notes appear to experience the beneficent influence of warm rains and sunshine and southerly winds. A few days of genial weather will do much. The gardener who knows the tricks of May does everything in his power to avoid unpleasant after consequences. A slight protection at night with matting, straw, or litter is of the utmost importance, and while the drying winds continue without plenty of rain, remember the good effect of thorough waterings, especially upon plants which have been put in early in the spring. We have now arrived at the conclusion that planting at the right moment is essential to success. Take the Roses as an example. When planted in March the plants are generally poor, for the good reason that the rosarian always plants in autumn, and has the pick of the nurserymen's stock. Another reason is the withering east winds, which dry up the very juices of the plants not well



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TITHE-BARN.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

established in the soil, and make quick progress an impossibility. The King-cups, in a wet place in a meadow adjoining the garden in which these notes are written, are a reminder of the many strange forms that claim relationship with the golden native flower of May. The double form of *Caltha palustris* has quite rosettes of golden bloom, and remains longer in flower for this reason, but it has not the quaint beauty of the common wilding, which comes with the Primrose and Cowslip. Both single and double forms of the Marsh Marigold deserve a place in all water gardens, where, in rich soil, they grow apace—a golden stream in May. Now is the time to place the summer bedding plants in the open air, taking the precaution to watch the temperature at night in the event of a likely frost. Of course, the frost season may be regarded as over, but one never knows when a nasty snap may occur, even as late as this. The leaf of the Daffodil is yellowing, and if flowers are to be hoped for next year, this yellowing process must go on undisturbed. Any interference with the natural ripening of the leaf is resented by Daffodils, and we may say all bulbs, even of the indoor garden.

Scented-leaved Pelargoniums.—We are very glad to see in the May number of *Flora and Sylva* a coloured illustration of the scented-leaved Pelargonium Lady Mary Fox, and an article upon this much-neglected group of greenhouse flowers. We well remember the time, not many years ago, when such varieties as the Oak-leaved Unique and Attar of Rose were a gardening rage, but they have lost their popularity until once again fashion will bring them into favour. The writer of the article deplores the muddled condition of the nomenclature, but we certainly well remember the varieties which are so simply grouped as follows. It may be regarded as an excellent list for those who wish to grow a few of these pretty greenhouse flowers. For scent: Attar of Rose, Abrotanifolium, all the forms of Citriodorum, Lady Scarborough, Dale Park Beauty, and Prince of Orange. The finest flowers are Lady Mary Fox, Pretty Polly, Shrubland Rose, and Scarlet Unique. Those most useful for cutting are Capitatum, Radula, Sandback Beauty, Quercifolium, all the forms of Citriodorum, Pheasant's Foot, Filicifolium, and Fair Ellen. The most interesting and distinct kinds are, perhaps, Blandfordianum, Abrotanifolium, Betulifolium, Ternatum, and the smallest form of Citriodorum. "Most of the varieties," says the writer, "are easily grown in light, rich soil, the chief care being as to green-fly. They root easily as cuttings, and many of the varieties can also be increased from pieces of the root, but cuttings are more satisfactory. They are finest when grown as large trained specimens, but space cannot always be spared for this way of growing them, and very good results can be had more simply."

The Scarlet Runner as a Town Plant.—A correspondent writes: "No plant of the vegetable garden is better known than the Scarlet Runner, whether by its bold, twining shoots, its bright scarlet flowers, or by its welcome and prolific crop of beans in late summer or autumn. It is grown in almost every cottage garden in the country, and its value as an article of food is freely acknowledged; but it is not so generally known how well it succeeds in suburban gardens, or even in the little gardens in large cities, its only apparent necessity being a few hours of sunshine daily. It covers the garden wall with refreshing green foliage, and hides for a brief time the wearying sameness of brick and mortar. The Scarlet Runner does not necessarily require a border to grow in, but it succeeds very well when planted in disused margarine tubs or similar receptacles. The plant delights in rich soil, which should consist of well-decayed manure and loam in equal proportions. Now is a good time to sow the seed. Twelve seeds should be planted in a tub 12in. in diameter, and the growths may be trained to strings of any height from 6ft. to 10ft., one end of the string being fastened to the tub and the other to the top of the structure against which they are grown, so as to form a veil of foliage. All the attention the plants will require during the season of growth is a good watering three or four times a week, or as often as the soil becomes dry."

Grass at the Foot of Fruit Trees.—We have lately seen several young orchards, and not without feelings of regret that so much ignorance of common points of culture should prevail. One orchard we have in mind, an orchard of Cherry, Plum, and other fruits, which have proved a success in the immediate neighbourhood, but the grass has been allowed to thicken round the base of the trees to such an extent that a healthy tree-growth would have been impossible. It must be remembered by amateur fruit-growers, and we are much afraid that professional ones are not free



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THE PORCH.

"C.L."

from fault, that plenty of space must be left round the base of a tree to let the sun and air and rain act upon the roots.

Tulips in the Grass.—We planted a lot of refuse bulbs of Tulips in the grass last autumn twelve months with great success. The spring following planting the bulbs flowered abundantly, and, having little experience of the Tulip grown in this way, we anticipated a poor display this spring. The reverse has happened, and the blossoming has been not only more abundant, but the flowers are larger. Unfortunately, the effect is somewhat hotch-potch, owing to the miscellaneous character of the bulbs so kindly given to us, but we hope for a more pleasant grouping next autumn.

The Royal Gardens, Kew, and the Palace.—Kew is in its most beautiful dress in the month of May. The Bluebells are a sea of colour in the woodland surrounding the late Queen's Cottage near to the Old Deer Park, and the Gesner's Tulips have their big scarlet chalices open wide to the sun in the more dressed parts of the Botanic Garden. Botany and practical horticulture go hand in hand at Kew, and no garden in the world is so ably conducted, with Sir William Thiselton-Dyer as the controlling influence. It is not as well known, however, as it should be that the palace in the gardens is open to the public, and for this reason we welcome an excellent little guide by Ernest

Law, B.A., F.S.A. A very good plan is given of the gardens and palace and their surroundings, a catalogue of the pictures in the one time Royal palace, and much historical information. It is published by Hugh Rees, 124, Pall Mall, S.W., at the modest sum of sixpence.

Rhododendron Duchess of Portland.—Flowers of this beautiful new pure white hardy Rhododendron have been sent to us by the raisers, Messrs. Fisher, Son, and Sibray, of the Royal Nurseries, Handsworth, Sheffield. It is what is known as a dwarf Rhododendron, and the fact that it is perfectly hardy and flowers profusely, almost before the first Daffodil opens, should not be forgotten by planters of Rhododendron glades or of shrub groups, where such a variety as this is appropriate to the surroundings. We can imagine no sweeter early spring picture than a massing of this and the lovely Winter Heath (*Erica carnea*), a perfect surface of crimson, even under the most wintry skies. Rhododendron Duchess of Portland is one of the most beautiful of the many beautiful shrubs raised at Handsworth.

Planting Water-lilies.—We referred recently to the planting of Water-lilies, or Nymphaeas as they are called in books, but recur again to the subject, as the planting must be done within the next week or so. More than this we need not write.

ST. JOHN'S COLLEGE, OXFORD.

THE old toast, "Church and King," which is given every night in Common Room by the vice-president, might well serve as the distinguishing feature of the history of St. John's. The name which at once suggests itself in connection with the place is Archbishop Laud's, and that great man's college was pre-eminent in doing and suffering on the side for which he himself worked and suffered; in the eighteenth century the college was long a home of Jacobites and High Churchmen; and if in our own day the reproach brought against St. John's by Mark Pattison—that, like Christ Church, it was "corroded with ecclesiasticism"—was a pure piece of prejudice, yet the college would pride itself, with reason, on being faithful to the old lines in Church and State.

And this feature may be said to have been inherited from the founder. Sir Thomas White, Merchant Taylor, and Lord Mayor of London, to whose bounty the college owed its foundation in 1555, was undoubtedly a friend of the old order of

things, which was passing away. He was connected with the family of the great statesman saint, Sir Thomas More, and the rich vestments, which are still one of the treasures of the college library, were no doubt intended by him for use in the more ornate ceremonial of the Church of England as he had first known it. But whatever his sympathies may have been with the older forms of faith, he died as he lived, a loyal member of the Church of England. It has been well said, "he was a living representative of the continuity of the English Church. To him there seemed no breach with the past." His statutes were modelled on those drawn up by William of Wykeham for New College nearly 200 years before, and they were equally to be observed under Mary and under Elizabeth. His spirit is well shown in the letter, written a few days before his death: "Furthermore, if any variance or strife do arise among you, I shall desire you, for God's love, to pacify it as much as you may." And this shall be the last letter that ever I shall send unto you, and therefore I shall



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PORTION OF EAST CLOISTER INNER QUAD.

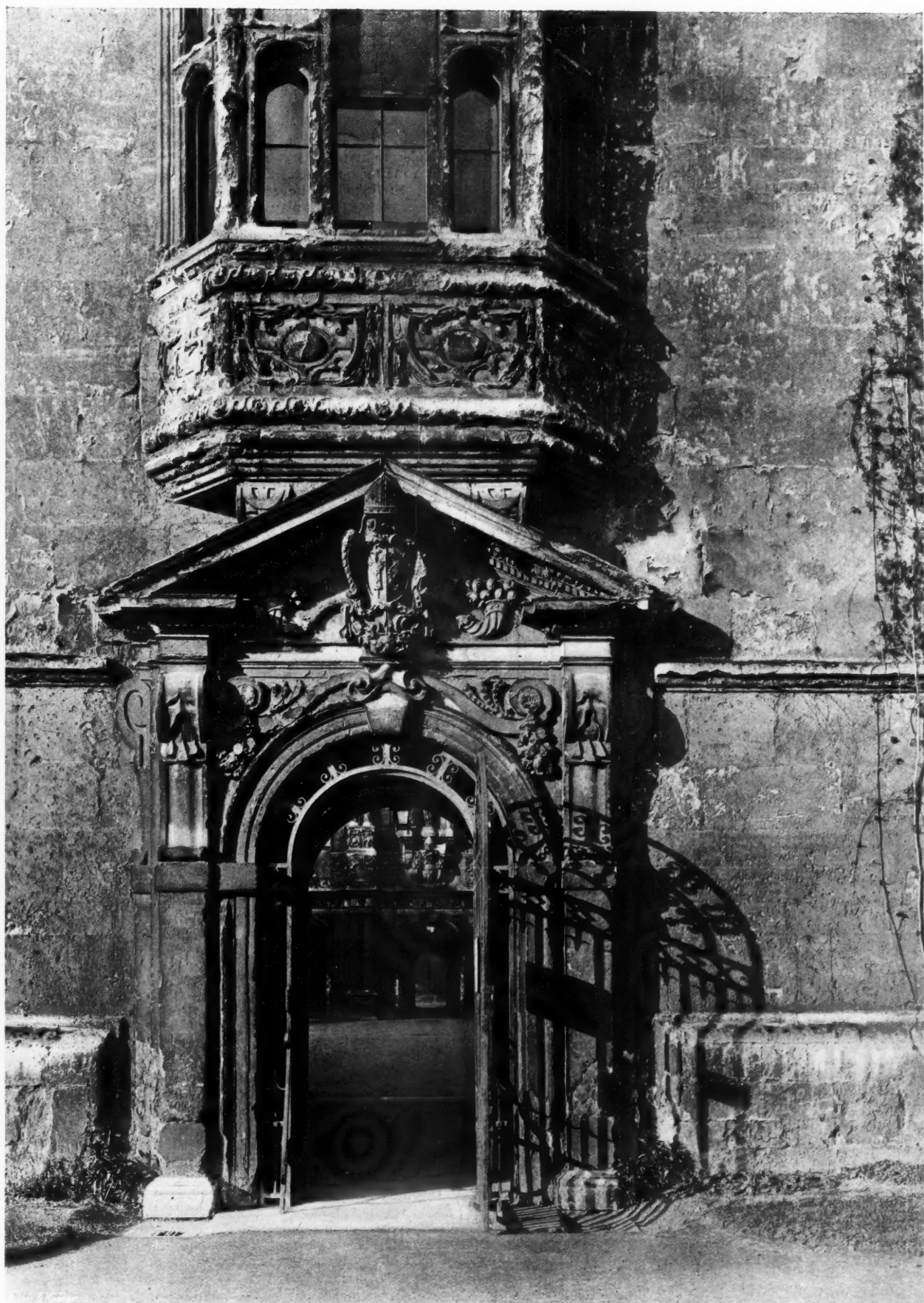
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THE GARDEN GATE.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

desire every one of you to take a copy of it for my sake." This last injunction is still observed, for a copy of the letter is given to fellows on their election. But it is, perhaps, fanciful to attribute so much importance to a founder's influence. What is certain is that Sir Thomas White gave a lasting turn to the development of his college by connecting it with the City of London, and especially with his own company; from the first the majority of the scholarships have been for Merchant Taylor boys, and this time-honoured connection has been spared even by two University commissions, to the great advantage both of college and of school. It is to be hoped that so old an arrangement will not now be broken down by the zeal of unsympathetic "reformers." The list of City benefactors, too, during the first century of the college existence shows that Sir Thomas White found many imitators; and it was fitting that one of the greatest Oxford benefactors, the indefatigable book-collector and non-juring bishop, Richard Rawlinson, should have come to St. John's as the scion of an old London family.

In another respect, too, the founder's arrangements have had a material influence on the fortunes of his college; he bought for it land and livings especially in the neighbourhood of Oxford,

of the sixteenth century. St. John's thus resembles the neighbouring foundation of Trinity in being the representative of monastic Oxford; Trinity continues the Benedictine Durham College, as St. John's does the old Cistercian house, and both these colleges were founded in the same year.

One more familiar feature must be just referred to which also belongs to the first generation of the college life; in 1576 it purchased the piece of ground in front of its main gate, which is, with its trees and enclosure, so picturesque a feature in Oxford's great street, St. Giles. Other colleges, *e.g.*, Balliol and Wadham, had once similar "fronts," by which they kept the world at arm's length, but they have unwisely let them go. St. John's still retains its privilege, and the hand of the municipal "improver" cannot touch this delightful anomaly; whether the St. John's undergraduate finds it a safe refuge from proctorial interference is a matter on which traditions differ.

St. John's had even from the first a reputation for being to the front in those plays and pageants that our ancestors in the sixteenth century loved, and a fortunate chance has preserved to us two of these, which were played there in the first decade of the seventeenth century. The more elaborate was the series of festivi-



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SOUTH END: GARDEN FRONT.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

and it was in pursuance of this policy that just after his death the ready money he bequeathed to St. John's was invested in the purchase of the manor of Walton (1573). This fortunate investment has made St. John's the ground-landlords of practically the whole of North Oxford. The famous Bagley Wood (to the south of Oxlord, bought in 1583) was a purchase more romantic, if less profitable. After delighting for three centuries the lovers of sport and of wild flowers, this wood is now to become part of the machinery for training those who are to conserve the forests of our great Indian Empire.

St. John's, however, had a corporate existence before its foundation by Sir Thomas White. The great Archbishop Chichele in the fifteenth century had erected part of its buildings (the front and the south side of the first quad) for his Cistercian college, dedicated to St. Bernard of Clairvaux, whose statue is still over the college gate. This, as a monastic foundation, had fallen a victim to King Henry, and had been given by him as part of its endowment to Christ Church. When Sir Thomas White bought it of that college he found his buildings ready to his hand, for to the original buildings of Chichele mentioned above, the hall and the chapel had been added in the first years

ties in 1607, when the Christmas Prince was chosen on All Saints' Eve, and the Christmas plays were not finished till Lent had begun. Revels of all kinds, Latin and English plays, and wassails had been spread over the interval, and a full record of them is preserved in MS. in the college library. Oxford must have been a merry place in those days, when all the officials, from the president to the porter, were more or less concerned in the revellings. Among the donors of subsidies was "Mr. Laud," who was in residence as a fellow. As we shall see, he, later on, employed the dramatic resources of his college to do honour to Royalty. King James had been entertained in this way in 1605, when Dr. Gwynne's comedy of "Vertumnus" was played before him. "The King was so over-wearied that after a while he distasted it and fell asleep. When he awoke he would have been gone, saying, 'I marvel what they think me to be,' with such other speeches, showing his dislike thereof. Yet did he tarry till they had ended it, which was after one of the clock" (*i.e.*, at night). Poor King!

When Laud invited King Charles and his Queen to open his new library, dinner was served in it, and then the company adjourned to the hall, where the play, "The Hospital of Love,"

was "merry and without offence, and so gave a great deal of content." "The college was at that time so well furnished that they did not borrow any one actor from any college in town." When the Queen "obtained the loan" of the dresses and "perspectives" for her professionals at Hampton Court, "by all men's confession the players came short of the University actors"—a truly surprising result. It was natural that Shirley, the last of the Elizabethans, should be connected with so dramatic a college; and if, in these more serious days, the revels of our ancestors seem to us as over-elaborate as their ruffs and trunk-hose, yet still the undergraduates of St. John's can show a pretty wit, and the tradition of pleasant fooling has been wisely retained (as witness the famous "Oxford Spectator").

Laud, like all great men, knew how to *desipere in loco*. He was anxious to maintain the old tradition of "Merry England" against the encroachments of the Puritan spirit; but he was himself continually merged in a ceaseless round of work for Church and State. He had been elected as scholar at St. John's in 1590, and he served his college as "grammar reader and divinity lecturer," and also as Junior Proctor (in 1603) before he became President in 1611. He never forgot that to St. John's he owed the start which had given him his success in life; to it, as to every institution with which he was connected, his liberality was splendidly shown. There are few pieces of architecture better known in Oxford, and more characteristic, than the completion of the inner quad, and especially the garden front, which St. John's owes to him. The work was finished in 1636, after it had been in hand five years, at a total cost of £3,208 4s. 3d.; it remains with Wadham as the most perfect specimen of the late Oxford Gothic. But the classical element is stronger at St. John's than it is in the neighbour college to the east; the beautiful cloister on each side of the quad, with its round arches on single columns, is frankly Italian in character. Tradition says, though there is no authority for the statement, that the design is that of the great Inigo Jones, and that the foreign elements were introduced after he had visited Italy while the work was in progress. Certainly, whoever was the architect, there is nothing more beautiful in Oxford than the low eastern front, where the singularly well-preserved grey stone, with its adorning creepers, looks out on the most glorious garden of Oxford.

Laud remembered his college to the last. In his will he says: "And for my burial, though I stand not much upon the place, yet if it conveniently may be, I desire to be buried in the chapel of St. John Baptist College, in Oxford, under the altar or communion table there. But wheresoever my burial may be, I will have it private, that it may not waste any of the poor means which I leave behind me to better uses." Laud's will was carried out after his death, when his remains were translated from All Hallows Barking, and laid in a vault under the chancel by those of Archbishop Juxon, who had succeeded him at Canterbury, and who was also a St. John's man.

It is fitting that the personal memorials of so devoted a son of the college should be preserved there. In the library are the MSS. of his diary and of the "History of the Archbishop's Troubles and Trial." There is an especially pathetic interest in the latter, written as it was day by day by the old man, after his long and exhausting hours in Court at Westminster. The Archbishop's walking staff, with which he supported his steps *cum ad mortem immeritam ductus esset*, and his skull cap, which he wore on the scaffold, complete as perfect a set of relics as the most earnest hero-worshipper could wish. No wonder that the archbishop has found the best of his modern biographers in a present fellow of his college, the Rev. W. H. Hutton, to whose history of St. John's in the College Histories Series (F. E. Robinson and Co.) I am especially indebted for the facts in this article.

To the glorious days of struggle succeeded, at St. John's as elsewhere, the time of inglorious ease, when the ignoble elements of the Royal party had made men almost believe that sobriety and learning were incongruous with the support of Church and State. Even as early as 1675, Prideaux records the visit of the Dutch Admiral Tromp to Oxford, "a drunken greazy Dutchman," and how John Speed, M.D., of St. John's, "stayed in town on purpose to drink with him," and how the seasoned student was more than a match for the sea-dog, who confessed that he "was more drunk here than anywhere else since he came to England, which I think very little to the honour of our University," Prideaux grimly adds.

But it is not necessary to believe all that college gossip tells of the excesses of other colleges, and, in any case, the excesses of Old Oxford have long passed away with other more creditable peculiarities. But even at its darkest times, St. John's was faithful to the tradition of maintaining its beautiful "groves." The formal Dutch walks of the seventeenth and eighteenth century gave place more than 100 years ago to the characteristically English style of garden. "The terrace, the mount, the wilderness, the well-contrived arbours" have disappeared, and in their place there is the largest expanse of greensward in Oxford, and flower-beds which may be said to have an European reputation for the variety and the beauty of their plants. Leaving

out of the question the charm of the buildings that look on it, the garden at St. John's may safely challenge any competitor in either University. One of its students has enthusiastically said "it unites as many conceivable delights as any spot since Paradise"; it is not necessary to be very young to agree with him.

POULTRY-FARMING IN FRANCE.

THE poultry and egg produce throughout the whole of the world is so enormous that it is absolutely impossible to arrive at the correct statistics. It is, however, estimated that France rears every year 4,000,000 cockerels and 45,000,000 pullets. These in their turn produce 3,600,000,000 eggs, a large percentage of which are exported, and chiefly to England; therefore it is quite evident that this industry is no small source of revenue to the country. In spite of these quantities, the production is not equal to the consumption; in fact, according to a Chicago farmers' paper, they have resorted to making artificial eggs, and I am told that even in Paris there exists a large factory, and that a big business is done in this article. All the machinery used in this manufacture is solely of wood; the presence of any metal whatsoever would affect the flavour. Before this manufactured egg is complete it undergoes four distinct processes—the formation of the yolk, the albumen, the skin, and, finally, the shell. The ingredients are perfectly harmless, and are of great keeping qualities; this egg never putrefies. The taste differs nothing from that of the ordinary egg. American inventive genius may one day arrive at the problem of hatching these.

Large poultry farms exist throughout France, and the industry is carried out on a much larger scale than over here. Incubators are always employed; one farm alone on the outskirts of Paris has fifty-five incubators regularly working, and from 10,000 to 11,000 eggs a month are regularly hatched out. M. I. Philippe of Houdan, who has taken innumerable medals for his appliances, informs me that the industry has immensely increased of late years, and that the business is a very prosperous one; he supplies his "Houdanaise" incubator very often to English people. I have, indeed, seen a 200-capacity one at work here, and the eggs for incubation were also supplied by the same firm. It would take too long to enter into details of all the farms, but I will just mention a few, of which I have a personal knowledge: M. Goupil, at Liencourt, Seine-et-Oise, who is very well known; another is M. Navet of La Blancherie, Mayenne, who issues a weekly journal of his produce; yet another well-known one is M. Gambais in Rouillier-et-Arnaud; and M. Creil, Seine-Inférieure, who has a regular stock of from 3,000 to 4,000 head. These birds are disposed of in the market at 30 sous the pound. His egg produce is naturally considerable. The breeds mostly cultivated are the Houdans, which rank as first favourites for general utility purposes, as they are very hardy and the pullets very precocious; they start laying in January, and in mild winters even earlier. The flesh is very white and delicate also. The Silver Hamburg and the Langshan follow. For egg production, the Hamburg is almost the most profitable. One farmer states he kept a separate account of one pen of Hamburgs, and found that the seven fowls produced in one year 1,552 eggs. The only disadvantage is that the eggs from these are smaller than those of the Houdan and Langshan. The Crèveœur is special to certain parts of Normandy, and La Flèche is at its best in Mans and Barbezieux. Other breeds, of course, are known, but do better on their own soil, and do not bear transporting.

The system of housing and feeding is identical with ours, only they are even more particular to give plentiful supplies of green food, especially to birds kept in pens. Horseflesh is largely used, and is a valuable and nourishing article of consumption. Sunflower seed is also a favourite—it contains so much oil and is good for fattening. The French advocate barley and oats, and believe in buying all poultry-food of the very best. From my own experience I have always found it cheapest in the end. Small *propriétaires* and peasants bring their poultry and eggs to market on certain days. The fowls are bought by the pound or whole. *Coquiers* (or *coquetiers*, as they are sometimes called) collect all the eggs from these peasants, who bring their well-filled baskets regularly; they in their turn sell them elsewhere.

The French fatten their poultry and caponise their cockerels. These are sent in immense quantities to different parts. England takes a large share of these. Most of the *poulets de Mans* at our largest restaurants and hotels are exported from France.

Pure-bred birds, that mature quickly, are killed without fattening, from the age of three months, and are sold as *poulets de grains*. The cost of feeding these is small, they realise good prices, and are very delicate eating. They are equivalent to our spring chicken. French farmers do not believe, as so many English do, that fowls are subject to many diseases. They think that with cleanliness, pure water, plenty of chalk and grit,

and ordinary care, most diseases can be avoided. Above all, they make a point of regular feeding.

The race that French farmers recommend for our climate is the Faverolles; if properly fed, it attains the weight of 4 kilos at the age of four months. I have taken great care to secure my information on all these points, and I am assured that poultry-farming in France, especially when carried out on a large scale, is a very profitable concern. As regards artificial incubation, we all know it is a very ancient system practised in China and in Egypt, where incubating ovens were employed. These produced annually more than 100,000,000 chickens. This industry still exists in Egypt, but is restricted to certain villages of the Nile Delta; 30,000,000 chickens are still hatched there yearly.

The French plant, such as incubators, foster-mothers, and feeding-utensils, is all more or less on the same system as ours. Likewise their mode of egg preserving. One of the favourite preservers is linseed oil, which is smeared all over the egg with a piece of linen saturated therein, taking care not to leave any pores of the shell exposed.

One word as to the employment of your own eggs for incubation. As my article on poultry-farming of December last, touching upon the cost of eggs for that purpose, mentioned, I only bought these the first year, as I had no eggs of my own. The second year I bred from specially-mated pens, and thus my egg account was *nil* the following years. There is a tremendous business done in this one branch alone; indeed, if your birds are well mated from good laying strains, it is a most remunerative one. You can always sell your eggs at from 5s. a setting to almost fancy prices, according to the breeds. A glance at the poultry pages in the *Exchange and Mart* will convince anyone on this point. I am always ready to answer any questions on this subject, either through the medium of *COUNTRY LIFE* or privately.

ANTIQUE PLATE IN THE EASTERN COUNTIES.

THE well-educated man can hardly fail to respect and appreciate antique plate. Certainly the extraordinary rises in the prices realised at auctions since the first comprehensive exhibition of works in silver was held in the Burlington Fine Arts Club, show that the desire to possess it has not abated. A splendidly-illustrated

in old silver. The wealthiest abbey in plate and jewels was that of Walsingham, only rivalled perhaps by St. Albans, and much of this was credited to the skill of the craftsmen-monks. There is still more ancient college plate in Cambridge than anywhere else. It is also remarkable that the only really fine examples of English ecclesiastical plate yet recovered as treasure trove are the exquisite censer and incense boat of Ramsey Abbey found in



Mrs. Delves Broughton

AT ST. PETER'S, MANCROFT.

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Whittlesea Mere. But more important is the fact that the oldest mediæval covered cup in existence, exquisitely enamelled and gilt, is still the pride of the Corporation of Lynn. In the neighbouring church of Middleton, it is worth noting, are a refined Elizabethan flagon, with its original gilding, and a chalice and paten, apparently unknown. Also the civic plate of Norwich is second to none, for it comprises the matchless ewer and rose-water dish presented by Henry Howard, and hardly surpassed by any contemporary work of the Continent, besides the rock-crystal mace, a magnificent standing salt, and one of the rare Elizabethan embossed flagons.

The church of St. Peter's, Mancroft, in Norwich possesses an extensive and varied series of church plate well deserving illustration. The oldest of the seventeen pieces belonging to the church is the cup, with its cover beside it, on the left of our group, remarkable as the only piece of plate cited by Cripps with the date letter for 1543. The finest specimen is the grandly-embossed standing cup and cover in the centre, presented by Sir Peter Gleane in 1633, undoubtedly once a loving cup and thus more appropriate to the civic board than to the church ritual. It resembles the still finer loving cup, belonging to St. John's College, Cambridge, made in 1616. Both closely follow German lines, and were perhaps equally inspired by the superb cup of solid gold designed and executed for Jane Seymour when Queen, 1536-37. Holbein's original drawing for this is still fortunately preserved in the British Museum. The fine chalice and paten to the right complete the series of Tudor plate.

Our second group is chiefly remarkable for the Dutch influence it discloses, naturally most pronounced in the Eastern Counties. Peter Peterson, a Dutchman, was admitted to the Goldsmiths' Guild of Norwich as early as the tenth year of Henry VII. His son of the same name became famous, and many of his works, marked with a sun, are known. In his will we meet with the more famous name of Cobbold. The Cobbolds were leading goldsmiths in the time of Elizabeth, but unfortunately none of their productions have so far been identified. The great banking business of Ipswich, it is well known, is still held by their direct descendants. Another link with Holland is the old Norwich touch mark, a seeded rose crowned, identical with

that of Dordrecht. The octagonal plate with indented margin shown in the group is a characteristic Dutch form of the seventeenth century, and the pair of bowls may be similarly derived. The covered cup and flagon are good solid examples of English seventeenth century plate, while the fine pair of flagons, with globose bodies on feet, in our first group are of a form first seen with us towards the close of the sixteenth century.



Mrs. D. Broughton.

SEVENTEENTH CENTURY NORWICH WORK.

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catalogue of this exhibition, by J. Starkie Gardner, was issued by the club, it will be remembered, about two years ago, and is now out of print. Probably many a neglected plate chest or strong room has been examined by the light of this, and many of the ancient pieces brought to light have been sent to Christie's owing to the record prices lately fetched under the hammer. The counties of East Anglia appear to be richer than others

A TAME TIGRESS AND HER FOSTER-MOTHER.

I SUPPOSE that no one has ever seen a lion lying down with a lamb. But I can record the nearest approach to it that has occurred, in the persons of Juno and her foster-mother, a milch goat. Juno was a tigress, born near Chikalda, in the Mēlghāt Hills in Berar, and was taken with the rest of her litter before her eyes were open, which was, in my opinion, a cruel thing to do on the part of whoever did it. In Berar, at least, tigers are not very offensive beasts. They live on wild game, very seldom molesting cattle, and, unless wounded, practically never attack men. The panther is the animal that does all the mischief, for which the tiger has to bear the blame. To resume, the result of this act was to leave a distracted tigress wandering about the hills, who, in her misery, rapidly became a very real danger—a fact which the human denizens of the jungle were not long in realising. Everyone who could leave the district did so, and those who were unable to were very chary of leaving their villages, except in large parties, and when they did so never wandered off the most frequented roads. And no amount of money was sufficient to tempt them to go about at night, or penetrate the jungle, until the bereaved mother left the neighbourhood, as she did after a few weeks.

Meanwhile, her family did not thrive, and in spite of all their owner could do for them, all died except Juno. And probably she would not have survived either if a happy inspiration had not led her mistress to give her a foster-mother in the shape of a goat. Fortunately, her new diet agreed with her, and she gave no further anxiety, and grew up into a most engaging little cub. When I first saw her she was about two months old, a little bigger than a large dachshund, and very much the build of one, with an extremely long body and short legs, and huge paws and head, very much more clumsy in appearance and movements than a kitten of the same age. But a more friendly, charming little beast I never saw. She looked upon every human being as her natural friend and playmate, and when a visitor came to the house, especially so if a lady, she invariably introduced herself and insisted on a romp, in which she was always as gentle as could be.

I did not see her again for nearly a year, during which period, though she was always the same gentle, friendly beast, her increasing size had made her rather a source of alarm to nervous people. Also, though she had no intention of being rough, her gambols, and especially the swishing of her long tail, were apt to result in disaster to furniture and ornaments. So she was banished to a shed in the compound and kept fastened up with a long, strong chain that gave her plenty of liberty, allowing her to go in and out of her shed as she pleased. But, strange to say, though long past the age when a tiger begins to live on raw meat exclusively, its own kill or its dam's, in a wild state, she never lost her taste for milk, in spite of two orthodox meals daily. And what is more, she preferred it straight from the goat, and testified her annoyance very clearly when her foster-mother was first taken away. Accordingly the goat was brought back again next day, and from henceforth the great tigress had her milk twice a day as a regular thing, and one might see her, as in the photograph, lying down beside the goat, sucking like a cub, and enjoying herself immensely. Strange to say, the goat did not seem to object to this much more than to ordinary milking, and was perfectly quiet once the tigress had begun her meal. Juno never hurt her, and I suppose after a time the goat realised that no harm was meant, and accepted the infliction with true Oriental resignation.

When I saw her again she was about a year old, and measured over 7ft., being then longer than an average-sized panther, and much more heavily built. Although quite large and strong enough to hunt and kill for herself, she was just as sweet-tempered and playful as she had been when a cub, and thoroughly appreciated being petted. I called upon her in the afternoon, and shortly after I arrived, when I had played with her for a while, her foster-mother was brought up, and after the few preliminary kicks which every self-respecting goat gives before being milked, Juno was able to enjoy her unconventional meal. It looked extremely strange to see the great tigress thus employed, and it seemed to violate all one's sense of the fitness of things.

When her meal was over, she succeeded in catching a fox-terrier who had been her playfellow all her life, and the two had a great romp. At first sight, it looked as if the fun was all on Juno's side, as she held the little dog down in her great paws and bit him all over, sometimes closing all her teeth on him. But the dog was used to this game, and bit and pulled the tigress's nose and lips and whiskers unmercifully, occasionally absolutely fixing his teeth in and holding on. But Juno never resented this violence in the least; nothing could ruffle her temper, and she seemed thoroughly to enjoy dodging the terrier's snaps, trying to get in a bite upon him, and then raise her head out of reach before he could retaliate. The strange thing about her was that, in spite of her enormous strength, nothing could have been more

gentle than her ways when playing with her human and canine friends. She never hurt anyone, and there was no more suggestion of roughness or violence about her than there is about a big dog that has been well brought up. The only drawback to playing with her was that, though she never put out her claws, the points of them as they protruded from her pads sometimes caught in one's garments, and, if one did not notice it and move away, the result was rather damaging to the thin stuffs that one wears in India. Also it is worth noting that, in playing with a tiger or such animal, one should avoid moving away suddenly, or, indeed, any sudden movements, for that always excites a cat. In Juno's case the only result was that she seized one promptly with her paws, and, though she did so without any violence, her claws were likely to do mischief to one's things, as I have just described. I never saw anything like the affection she displayed towards her mistress. Once she had got hold of her it was most difficult to persuade her to let her go, and when she did succeed in getting away, the tigress strained at her chain and whined after her for some time after she was out of sight.

I wish I could record a continuation to her history as happy as its commencement. But I am afraid I cannot do so. Her mistress was at length unable to keep her, so she was sold to a big dealer in wild animals, who was told her history, and solemnly undertook that she should be disposed of in such a way as to ensure her being well treated. He also promised to let her old mistress know what became of her. But the latter was never able to extract any information from him. He obstinately refused to answer her enquiries, and so we can only infer that poor Juno is either dead, the happier fate, or else dragging out a miserable



NURSING HER ENEMY.

existence, cooped up in a tiny cage in some native prince's collection or in a travelling menagerie. For callous disregard of wild animals' well-being in captivity, the methods employed in native princes' collections in India are quite unrivalled.

GARETH.

BOWLING IN THE SOUTH.

IF reliance can be placed on the Southampton Municipal Records, and there is no reason to doubt them, the piece of land situated just outside the old borough walls has been dedicated to the Royal and Ancient game of bowls since the year 1299, when good King Edward I. was King. Thecroft, devoted to the recreation of the citizens, was placed under the control of a master, who ranked, it is said, next to the Mayor of the borough. It was called the Master's Close, and this official appears to have been chosen annually, a custom which prevails up to the present day. The date when this piece of ground was first devoted exclusively to the game of bowls is a matter of uncertainty, but, in a plan of the town of Southampton, dated 1611, the ground is not only plainly marked, but on the map are seen quaint figures of men bowling, proving that the game was its distinctive feature at that date. What is known as the present Southampton Bowling Green Club was formed considerably over 100 years ago, and the custom of electing a master of the green is confined to the members of this organisation. The club have enclosed the land (for which, by the by, they pay no rent), they have erected a club-house thereon for the use of members, and they have expended considerable sums of money in keeping the green in perfect order for bowling, so that bowlers would find great difficulty in discovering a more perfect playing pitch or a green with more beautiful floral surroundings than are presented here in this the twentieth century. Another ancient custom, of somewhat obscure origin, is that attending the annual match for the club's silver medal. The winner, besides becoming the owner of a coveted trophy bearing the inscription "Win it and wear it," is also created a knight of the green, has the prefix Sir attached to his name, and is addressed as Sir in all conversation and documents connected with the green. Only knights of the green are eligible for the mastership. One inconvenience attending the knighthood is that the individual must always carry his medal with him,

as the master can always call on the knights present to produce their medals, and they have to pull them out of their pockets, and hang them round their necks by a piece of ribbon. If the knight fails to do this, he is fined 5s. Considering that the medals are much larger and heavier than a five-shilling piece, they are handicapped to a certain extent in their playing. At the 100th anniversary of the present club a gold medal was competed for, and was won by a well known local J.P.

The opening ceremony always takes place the first Wednesday in May, and additional interest was this year given to the proceedings by members providing several prizes for competition. As individual play was necessary, the ring game was adopted. There were four rinks, and eight ends were played. As already stated, the condition

of the green was perfect, and the bowling, for opening day, remarkably good. The prizes were distributed after the annual dinner. It was stated that the Mayor, according to custom, would give a gold medal for competition later in the season; and the Sheriff, who was present, said he should be pleased to give a silver medal as a second prize. A member reminded the master that in previous years they had received visits from and played New Zealand and Canadian teams, and he suggested that when the Australian cricket team came to Southampton to play Hampshire C.C. they should invite them to the green. The master stated, on behalf of the committee, that they would be glad to welcome and entertain the Australians, and he hoped they would be able to arrange a bowling match with them.

G. D.

WINDFLOWER AND POPPY.

NOTHING is more interesting to the observant countryman than watching the flowers as they open, fade, and give place to those that are to follow in the beautiful ordering of Nature. At one time the copse is yellowed over with primrose, then hidden with the blue of the bluebell, or starred over with fragile windflowers, which open to the sunlight and close as evening creeps on. Soon the wild rose will colour the hedgerow and mingle its warm fragrance with the twining honeysuckle, while by the edge of distant field we seem to see the green of the corn poppy, a cheerful little plant, but more cheerful still when its frail petals move gently in the summer wind and make crimson clouds where little else will grow. Such thoughts as these occur to mind while looking at the illustrations of the windflower of Japan and the Shirley poppy, that beautiful gift from the raiser, who, with a far-seeing eye, discerned in the poppy of the field a variation from the normal form.

It is a truism that no two flowers of the same family are exactly alike, and sometimes this dissimilarity means so beautiful a breaking away from what is regarded as the type that it becomes in the hands of the hybridiser a flower to welcome in garden or woodland. The Shirley poppy is as world-famous as the cabbage rose, and its history is best told in the words of the raiser, the Rev. W. Wilks, the well-known vicar of Shirley, and secretary of the Royal Horticultural Society: "In 1880 I noticed in a waste corner of my garden abutting on the fields a patch of the common wild field poppies, one solitary flower of which had a very narrow edge of white. This one flower I marked, and saved the seed of it alone. Next year out of



M. C. Eames.

SNOWY WHITE.

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JAPAN WINDFLOWER.

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perhaps 200 plants I had four or five on which all the flowers were edged. The best of these were marked and the seed saved, and so for several years, the flowers all the while getting a larger infusion of white to tone down the red, until they arrived at quite pale pink, and one plant absolutely pure white. I then set myself to change the black central portions of the flowers from black to yellow or white, and at last fixed a strain with petals varying in colour from the brightest scarlet to pure white."

A primrose copse will disclose many interesting flower variations of form and of colour, here a little tuft of pure white, and there a darker yellow than the flowers nestling close to it, and occasionally a variety that it is no sacrilege to dig up and preserve in the garden for closer observation. The Shirley poppy, as we have seen, is simply the result of observation, and its grace and refinement are clearly shown in the illustration. It is a flower for the fairies to touch, and so frail that the tenderly-coloured petals tremble in the gentlest wind.

And what of the windflowers, the anemones of field and mountain pasture? They, too, are welcome in the English garden, even the wilding which seeks the shelter of copse and hedgebank, but even more so the blue windflower of the Apennines, the *Anemone apennina*, which opens with primrose and daffodil. The windflower of Japan is a different flower. It comes with the starwort and golden rod, and stands straight and strong in the border, its leafy stems crowned with flowers of snowy white. Windflower and poppy, whether of these isles or the lands over the seas, gladden the places where they grow—



M. C. Eames. CHILDREN OF SUNSHINE. Copyright

weeds we may call them, but weeds that bring sweetness to the garden, and that wilder garden of Nature wherein a thousand flowers open and fade unseen.

A BOOK OF THE WEEK.

THERE has just come from America a book that will interest our more thoughtful readers. It has been compiled from the works of Walt Whitman by Horace Traubel, and is called *The Book of Heavenly Death* (Mosher). It deals with a question on which we all hunger for evidence in our hours of contemplation. For there is a fact so simple that no one fails to apprehend it, yet so impressive that the most trifling find it arresting, and the boldest is quelled by it—this is, that whatever is born has also to die. The thing that exists as an organism will one day cease to exist. It may be composed of indestructible materials, but, after death, these are held together by no bond. The dead body may be, and generally is, attacked by a million other organisms, or divided and swept hither and thither by wind and water. But what else occurs? Science is inclined to answer that soul and body are one, and that, as life flickers out, that form of energy which theologians call soul lapses into the universal consciousness. It says that Nature has no more care for man than for her other creatures. His existence is exactly analogous to that of the beasts that perish. He eats, drinks, sleeps, propagates his kind for a number of years, and then passes away, even as the withered autumn leaf. And by a great wealth of circumstantial evidence is this view supported. Man's close alliance with other animals is proclaimed by his anatomy, and the *Menschensvorgänger* appears to have been a miserable creature, who learned to walk upright owing to the difficulty of reaching the berries it fed on. And onwards from that condition the history of the race can be traced, if not from point to point, at least along a line of broad development. Trillions of generations have during the ages gone to people "the vast and mighty nations of the dead"; is their existence after death assured, or is it but a fond illusion? Was it only that primitive man beheld the faces of his dead relatives in dreams, and then conceived the idea that they were immortal, and built for them shadowy mansions that grew into Valhallas and meads of Asphodel and Hell and Paradise? Such in bald terms is the plain, unflattering answer of Science.

It may be instructive to place beside it the opinion of Walt Whitman, one of the most intuitive of modern poets. Lest we should fail to apprehend his meaning when expressed in verse, Mr. Traubel has set it down in prose as follows:

"Whitman sometimes complained to me that many of his own friends had mistaken his philosophy about death. He did not speculate with the

idea of an indefinite race immortality. He asserted a definite individual immortality. He wished to be understood as standing explicitly for this conclusion. Ingersoll said to him: 'Whitman, I cannot argue out immortality.' To this Whitman replied: 'Neither can I.' Ingersoll added: 'I cannot see it.' Whitman added: 'I can see it.' Ingersoll instantly caught the distinction. 'I understand,' he said. And then they were both silent."

But in other respects Walt Whitman's philosophy is peculiar. He was not one of those who fling themselves heart and soul into the activities of life, at first, perhaps, allured by such will-o'-the-wisps as fame and happiness, but finding at last only weariness, disillusion, disappointment. With him "there is no imperfection in the present, and there can be none in the future"—which to us is a mystical and dark statement, for are not defeat, disease, pain, imperfections? It is not only the happy who have to be consulted, but "the old man who has lived without purpose, and feels it with bitterness worse than gall." Whitman has stated the problem with the vivid skill of a true poet:

"women gather'd together on deck, pale, heroic, waiting the moment that draws so close—O the moment!
A huge sob—a few bubbles—the white foam spirting up—and then the women gone,
Sinking there while the passionless wet flows on—and I now pondering,
Are those women indeed gone?
Are souls drown'd and des'roy'd so?
Is only matter triumphant?"

But his answer is only an ecstasy. And it is not that of the old and sober poets, such as Homer, "Better be thrall to a landless man, Odysseus, than bear sway over all the kingdoms of the dead." Shakespeare's most thoughtful characters are always what the Scotch call "swithering" as to there being anything beyond "this bank and shoal of time." And there is a ring of pessimism in such a sentence as this, "The evil that men do lives after them, the good is oft interred with their bones." Whoever wrote the Book of Job, he, like the poet of the Psalms, regarded death as synonymous with oblivion. Under the strain of tense thought and deep emotion men instinctively think of death as yielding rest, "Henceforth repose, thy work is done." Nowhere among the very greatest minds do we find a sentiment like this expressed:

"Come lovely and soothing Death,
Undulate round the world serenely arriving, arriving
In the day, in the night to all, to each
Sooner or later delicate death."

No, we are brought back to the great and primitive truth that death is the enemy of life to be fought with in a losing



M. C. Eames.

SHIRLEY POPPIES.

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battle. Doctors say that in the natural course of things it comes easy at the end, those who are old and frail and weary being indifferent, and usually passing away in painless unconsciousness. To the strong and healthy the idea of it is the most repugnant. Experience shows, however, that it may become deprived of its terror even to the brave and lusty. It is defied daily by soldiers, and there are nations like the Japanese who will recklessly encounter it without any hope of future bliss to reward them. Life, on the other hand, is the richest gift we possess; indeed, it includes all others. Yet there are some to whom it becomes hateful, either because misfortune has stretched them on a rack, or the punishment for their own thoughtless follies has been too severe. And so a number, perhaps an increasing one, are ready at a moment's notice, not in any fantastic love of "heavenly death," but with grim hate and desperation, to fling away the treasure that was given them without the option of a refusal.

Thus Science and Poetry are equally true and equally instructive, but they approach the question of immortality by different avenues. And they leave the question unanswered. Till the secret of life itself is discovered, till we know when and under what conditions it first appeared on this planet, Science can be in no position to dogmatise. At present it can only be agnostic. Life to it is a phenomenon which cannot be fully and satisfactorily explained. Nor, therefore, can death, nor what comes after death. But the poet is in no better condition. Usually it is the man of inferior equipment who is most dogmatic. We have seen that the greatest at their greatest moments looked on an after life as a dim possibility only. They viewed the future with a melancholy that is not the less impressive because of its restraint and dignity. And they do not fail to admit that of all the shadowy legions who have gone down to the dust not one has given an authentic sign of his continued existence. So they have likened death to sleep—heavy, dreamless, unawakening.

OVER THE WOODS.

IF he were a Prussian, I suppose he would be an official with a uniform and a high-sounding title. Being what he is, he is a plain person in an old frieze coat and well-worn riding-breeches; he writes himself down "forester,"

and is vulgarly known as "him 'at's over t' woods." He began life on his father's farm, and at six years old was sent to the village school, then under the mild rule of an octogenarian dominie; thence to the grammar school of a neighbouring town, riding his seven miles daily in and out on a rough pony, while as yet bicycles were not. At sixteen—the prospects of agriculture being considered not hopeful—he was entered at the warehouse of a firm of drapers in the county town; and was thus set at the opening of the high road to wealth. But bolder spirits than he ere this have deserted rosier opportunities. Commerce was not his romance; and the delights of "living in" were no delight to him. So he turned his back on that path to fortune which is spread with shirrings and dress-lengths, and went back one ninth of February with a hangdog face to the moorland farm.

His old father's grimly-meant reminder that if he "wadna put on a draper's coat he maun gan in a plewman's sark" was fulfilled to the letter. Within a week the hangdog look became one of settled content as he turned again into the familiar ways, driving his plough-team in the Twelve Acre or doing a long day's solitary fencing at Greenhowe's Rigg. The joy of the pressed man who lays down his arms is only to be equalled by that of the volunteer who takes them up. And if he had loved the land before, he loved it now with a difference born of a widening knowledge. Among his few books, bartered at school, were an old Selborne and Atkinson's "Birds' Eggs," and these he read over and over with insatiable delight. He began to keep a secret journal of observations, spent many hours on summer nights wandering about the fields and woods, and took long Sunday rambles to the haunts of unfamiliar species. The "Life of Robert Dick," the Thurso naturalist, a school prize hitherto unread, proved a fresh source of inspiration; but otherwise he had only the smallest means of gratifying his craving for answers to the thousand questions of his eager mind; and it is with a tinge of sadness now, when it might be satisfied, that he recalls the intensity of that craving, contrasting it with the enforced indifference with which he is bound to regard many of those once burning considerations.

It sometimes amuses him to recall the trivial incident that set him on the way to his present calling. In hard weather, one January, he was busy with an old "daytal" man—a labourer



A. H. Blake,

WOODLAND WEEDS.

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past heavy work—"snigging" for firewood the fallen branches, wreckage of a recent gale. They had one horse, with trace-chains, which they hitched up to the windfalls, trailing them home over the frozen pasture-fields. The daytal man grinned toothless approval as the lad swung aloft, using the saw with judgment and skill where there were broken boughs to be cut away.

"Pity ye 'adna been yan o' Sir William's woodmen. Ye'd ha' framed better at that, maybe, than wi' 'osses an' kye."

The unintentional hint was a thing to be pondered over by one nursing secret ambitions. But it was the agent—Sir William's agent—who clinched the matter, weeks after, as he rode his cob up and down alongside where the lad was ploughing. The agent had a hearty liking for one who had had the good sense to get back to the land, comparing him in his own mind very favourably with the half-baked sort, in cheap town ready-made clothes, that were to be seen on their holiday visits to the old neighbourhood. Finding that his chaff on the subject of music halls and other town delights, now unattainable, was received with good-humoured indifference, the agent put leading questions, and before he rode away an understanding, tempered with characteristic caution on both sides, had been arrived at between them.

This time the gossips had no call to cry "Jack of all trades," for the woodman-to-be remained the ploughman—that was, only going two or three nights a week to the schoolmaster for arithmetic and trigonometry. Then for two full seasons successively he went off North to a large forest estate, and was hired as a labourer for felling. The second time he stayed on as foreman, and came among us no more until a year or two after, when there were all the changes on the Kepworth Park Estate; when, as we say, he "put in for" the forester's place and got it.

And now, if perhaps, after all, it may be said of any man that, having got his desire, he is satisfied, truly it may of this man. He has an all-sufficient competency ("a miserable pittance," Sir Pompey Bedell would call it), a good house and garden, and a healthy outdoor life, with enough of indoor work at his office desk to keep his pen hand in trim. The labour trouble vexes him not, for he is allowed good wages for his men, and he sees that he gets good men for the wages, as only the master can see who is known to be able to strip off his coat at a pinch and show a fool or a novice how the thing should be done. Above all, he loves his work. Like Colonel Newcome, he thinks his profession the finest in the world; only he would be more apt to call it his job than his profession. He has studied it as thoroughly as one may, in our insular unacademic fashion, is a member of the Society of Arboriculture, and a regular, if silent, attendant at their meetings. Under his care are some thousands of acres of woods and the proper nurseries, and he commands a little army of four-score or so workmen. The forester is an early riser. He is in the saddle, as a rule, an hour at least before some of us are out of bed, and his first rounds are finished before the post comes in. During



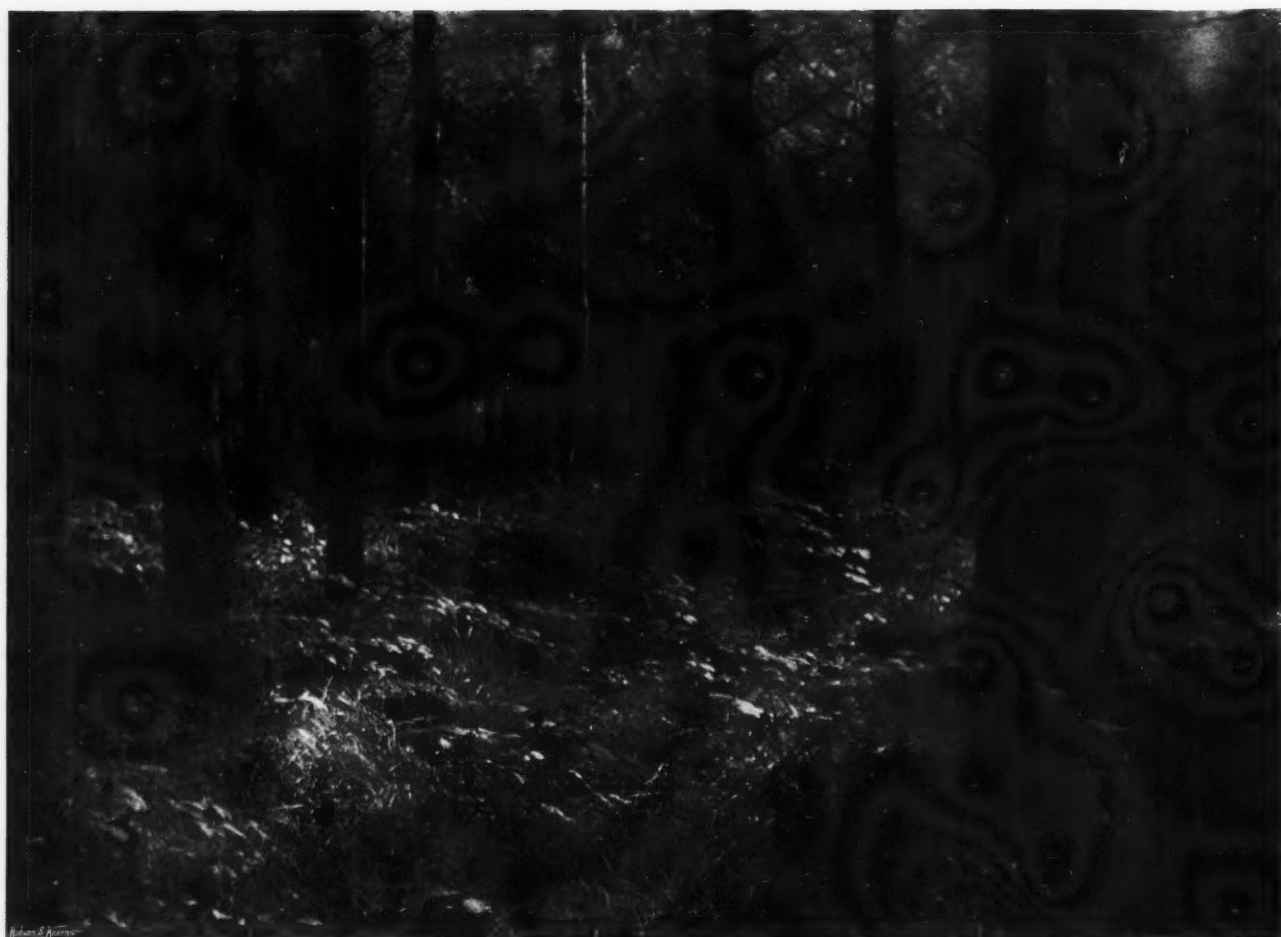
M. C. Cottam.

THE BIRCH WOOD.

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the morning he is in his office for two or three hours, but the afternoon finds him again on horseback, riding out to oversee the work going on in some of the distant woods. Or he will tackle a big job of measuring up timber, check over the produce of the sawyard—for all the fencing and other wood required on the estate has to be found by him—or make a leisurely survey of one of his plantations, which are visited in methodical rotation. The writing up of office books is all in the day's work, for he has no clerical staff. I am afraid he is a confirmed—and willing—overtimer.

Such a life as his is full of opportunities for one who, in the phrase of Gilbert White, "attends to" birds and the like things. The forester has never cried off with his old love. The sciences which bear upon his craft are at once his amusement and his despair; but he has to grapple with his difficulties single-handed; for we who live in the country are apt to leave these studies to the townsfolk, who can get them up by going to lectures and museums. A weaker man might find this devotion to his hobby cost him the respect of his workmen, who are not unlikely to



C. D. Kay.

A FOREST GLADE.

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look upon the naturalists' pursuits much after the manner of Gabriel Betteredge; but with "him 'at's over t' woods" this is not so. He is credited with knowing "a vast deal about t' natur' o' plants an' insect's an' all sows." He knows that the help that the veriest novice may render is worth some sacrifice of the silence and reserve that else were preferred. But there are secrets yet that are his own. To a chosen friend he will whisper of knowing a station of *Cypripedium calceolus*, or show in their season the nests of three or four woodcocks. He has been at pains to get reduced the long vermin lists of the keepers, in which a price was set on the head of many an honest woodland creature. He loves to see the owls float light-winged at dusk along the aisles

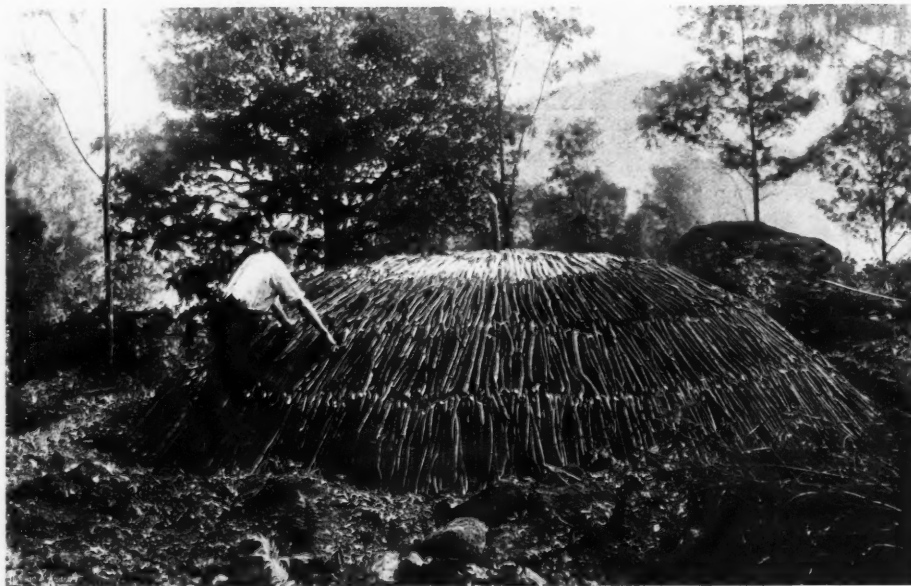
of the larch woods, and to hear the jays scold as he canters down the forest rides. His own pocket-book list of birds is a compilation that would turn an ornithologist of the towns green with envy.

What can life offer to such a man better than that which he has? It is his pride to be bringing order out of confusion, something out of next-to-nothing day by day; to be planting for others to reap, and helping in the revival of an ancient and honourable craft; and he would not leave his woods to take a hand in the most alluring sport in the world; or to clutch at money on the exchanges, were it poured in golden showers at his feet.

H. RAPHOE.

CHARCOAL-BURNERS.

ON the western side of Windermere is a large stretch of woodland which year by year furnishes raw material for the charcoal-burners of Furness. Though at times they penetrate to the historic village of Hawkshead, at the extreme north of the narrow wedge of land which Lancashire thrusts into the neighbouring county of Westmorland, they are still known as the charcoal-burners of Furness, because in times past the monks of



C. E. Watrsley.

STACKING THE WOOD.

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Furness exercised jurisdiction over the whole of this district.

The master charcoal-burner is often the product of three or more generations of "coalers," a word used to define their own calling. He is an expert forester, and knows to a nicety what price to pay for the "standing" wood. The two things which militate against the absolute surety of the amount of his profits are the fluctuations of the markets and the uncertainty of the weather. During

the greater part of the year he works with his men in the woods, for charcoal-burning has many side interests. From April until July they are busy stripping the trees of their bark, which is stored in the bark-houses to await a market. Last year there was practically no demand for it, and one master has at least 120 tons in hand, which he values at £4 per ton. The time between August and November is spent in preparing the wood for coaling, and for transport, for use in other industries, such as bobbin-turning, crate-making, basket-making, and coopering. One of the home industries is the making of besoms of the tough, pliant twigs of the birch. Quite recently a master sold 4,000 dozens. At this period the sites for the pits are chosen in close proximity to a good water supply, and the pit rings formed—a collection in a circle of sufficient wood to build a pit. In late September or early October the stacker begins to build the pits. One of the photographs portrays him surveying a very good specimen of his handiwork, which at first sight we may be pardonably excused for mistaking for a Kaffir hut. His method is to place three sticks in the form of a gipsy caldron in the centre of the pit ring, round which he builds in concentric circles the wood allotted



C. E. Walmsley.

THE LAST SOD.

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expert) passes rapidly from tub to tub, throwing showers of water from his ladle upon the pit. The greater part of the steam engendered is driven inward and extinguishes the fire. The sods which formed the cap of the pit are withdrawn, as shown, and it is left to cool. The process of coaling, from the lighting to the extinguishing of the fire, extends over a period of two days and a night. The pits average about thirty-six sacks of charcoal; each sack represents a cubic yard of wood. Most of the charcoal is bought for the ironworks at Backbarrow.

The life of the charcoal-burners is a hard one. There is practically no cessation of work from the start to the finish of the season. Fine weather is as precious to them as to the farmer during haytime and harvest. It lightens and brightens their labour, and enables them to keep in the open during the livelong day; the comfort of this, and the discomfort of rain, may be better understood if we remember that the coalers do not wash for six weeks at a stretch. The little conical sod hut, which looks like an Indian tepee, provides them with shelter and sleeping quarters, beds being improvised out of sacks stuffed with hay. Their food is brought each day in the empty carts returning from the ironworks, and in the last photograph we see them sitting down to a meal in positions which accord with their own ideas of comfort. Their wages represent a sliding-scale operated by the

weather and the experience of the men, but a slight computation shows an average of 30s. per week—a sum which



C. E. Walmsley.

PUTTING OUT THE FIRE.

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him. The coalers follow him and cover the wood with a thick carpet of grass, thick enough to support a layer of gravel, which is the next part of the process, and makes the pit air-tight. The plug or stake, which is seen in another photograph projecting from the centre of the grass-covered pit, is withdrawn. The cavity is partly filled with charcoal, upon which the fire is placed. When the fire is sufficiently ignited the hole is covered with sods, that the fire may burn to the bottom of the pit and then out to the sides. Constant care is necessary to secure uniformity of burning. Especially is this the case during windy weather, when screens (which are shown in one of the pictures) formed of wood interwoven with bracken are erected round the pit to exclude the wind, which if allowed to play upon the pit would cause uneven burning. Occasionally the fire shows a tendency to take an erratic course, bursting out in miniature volcanoes on one particular side. These eruptions are quickly covered with sod or gravel to drive the fire inward. When the master decides that the charcoal is nearly ready large tubs are set at intervals round the pit and filled with water. Boots are changed for old ones, as the immediate vicinity of the pit is almost red-hot. The edges are trimmed, as shown in another picture, and the master (for it requires an



C. E. Walmsley.

COOLING OFF.

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the most exacting master will admit is well-earned.

Near saw-mill centres copping and undergrowth are of little value for hurdles and firewood, and would be a dead loss if not utilised for producing charcoal.

C. E. W.

THE PASSING OF THE DRAGONS.

TIME is jealous of his secrets; yet, in spite of the most strenuous efforts to obliterate the records of the past, fragments of the happenings of other days are constantly coming to light. These happenings, by some strange intuition, man sometimes anticipates; and thus it is that the dragons of fable have proved after all to be dragons in fact! So much, indeed, we have long realised, but now and again the truth of this is brought convincingly home to us.

Some years ago, for example, the world was startled by the discovery of the remains of some four-and-twenty huge reptilian monsters in the Wealden formations of Bernissart in Belgium. Walking on the hind limbs only, and standing some 18ft. high, these must have been formidable creatures indeed; but they pale into the commonplace when compared with the huge beast known as *diplodocus*. Though by no touch of the magician's wand can the dry bones of this long-extinct Goliath be made to live, we can form a very fair notion of its appearance in life when they are pieced together so that the skeleton can be surveyed as a whole. Thanks to the generosity of Mr. Andrew Carnegie this can now be done by all who care to visit the Natural History Museum at South Kensington, inasmuch as he has just presented a replica of the original specimen in the Carnegie Museum at Pittsburg. This model, which none but the initiated would distinguish from the real skeleton, was formally received by Lord Avebury on behalf of the trustees of the British Museum on Friday last in the presence of a distinguished gathering representing Science, Art, and Literature.

Diplodocus carnegii represents one of the largest animals that has ever walked this earth, being some 84ft. long, and standing nearly 14ft. at the withers! Perhaps the two most striking features of this monster are the enormous length of the tail, which tapered off to the thinness of a whip-lash, and the ridiculously small head. It was apparently herbivorous, and this because of the absence of molar or crushing teeth, and the form



C. E. Walmsley.

COALERS AND HUT.

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been too unwieldy for a strictly terrestrial habitat, and partly by the fact that the aperture of the nostrils was situated not at the end of the snout, but in the middle of the head, between the eyes.

The intelligence of this creature could not have been of a very high order, inasmuch as the brain, incredible as it may appear, was scarcely larger than a walnut! It possessed, indeed, as Lord Avebury remarked in the course of his speech, more nervous matter in that portion of the spinal column lodged between the hips than in the brain itself! Huge as it was, it was not secure from the attacks of enemies. Eloquent testimony of this fact is preserved on the shin-bone of the present specimen, which bears deep scars made by the teeth of some carnivorous dinosaur. Indeed, from one leg the point of a tooth was actually taken!

We are accustomed to regard all things on a colossal scale as the natural product of the American Continent, and readers of *COUNTRY LIFE* may, therefore, feel but a mild interest in this account of the latest acquisition to our natural history treasure-house. As a matter of fact, however, dinosaurs only slightly inferior in size to *diplodocus* once roamed over these islands. In addition to *iguanodons*, remains of an enormous reptile, known to-day as *cetiosaurus*, were found some few years ago at Oxford, and the hind limbs of one of these animals will now be found mounted in the Geological Gallery of the British Museum.

Fortunately monsters of this type no longer inhabit our rivers. The bare notion of a possible encounter therewith, would have lent to boating and fishing parties a spice of excitement, it is true, but to most of us it would have been pleasure taken sadly! W. P. PYCRAFT.



C. E. Walmsley.

LOADING BAGS OF CHARCOAL.

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of the long, rake-like cutting teeth, which were apparently used for gathering succulent herbage, such as would be found along river-beds and the banks on either side.

According to those most qualified to express an opinion on these matters, *diplodocus* was really an aquatic animal, haunting rivers, like the modern hippopotamus. This view is supported partly by the enormous bulk of the creature, which would have

never the whole clutch as in this case. (4) Willow-wren—a white egg, nearly round in shape; the other eggs in the nest were the ordinary variety. (5) Tree-pipit—four eggs of a light green ground, evenly spotted with light brown. These are quite different to any variety I have seen before. (6) Great tit—four eggs, very deeply blotched with red at the thick end. (7) Thrush—light blue egg without spots and nearly round. An egg of ordinary colouring, but not larger than that of a house-sparrow. (8) Black-

CORRESPONDENCE.

VARIETIES OF BIRDS' EGGS.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."] SIR,—Some of the curiosities I have in my collection, of which I send particulars, may interest your correspondent "W. F." (1) Reed-bunting—a white egg, nearly round; is one of the two white eggs that were in the nest, in addition to which there were also four eggs of the ordinary type. (2) Sedge-warbler—five eggs, the ground of which is almost white, with a few black streaks at the larger end. (3) Robin—a clutch of six eggs, all of which are pure white. I have several times found one or two eggs in a nest pure white, but never the whole clutch as in this case. (4) Willow-wren—a white egg, nearly round in shape; the other eggs in the nest were the ordinary variety. (5) Tree-pipit—four eggs of a light green ground, evenly spotted with light brown. These are quite different to any variety I have seen before. (6) Great tit—four eggs, very deeply blotched with red at the thick end. (7) Thrush—light blue egg without spots and nearly round. An egg of ordinary colouring, but not larger than that of a house-sparrow. (8) Black-

two eggs, pale blue in colour, no spots. These are rather larger than usual, and several eggs are pale blue, very slightly marked with brown spots. (9) Sparrow-hawk—eggs heavily blotched at the thin end; also some eggs with very little markings. (10) Pheasant—three small eggs, not larger than those of a thrush. (11) Grouse—a small egg about the same size as the pheasant's. (12) Lapwing—an egg nearly as large as a whimbrel's; three other eggs in the nest were of the ordinary size. All these eggs were carefully identified before being added to my collection.—W. H. M. PETERKIN.

PLAGUE OF VOLES.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—In many of our Southern gardens we are suffering severely from a plague of voles, which the gardeners commonly call mice. They are so numerous that they are eating everything in the way of young peas, and so on, that is not jealously protected from them, and the protection is no easy matter. We have trapped a great many with a fall-trap on the figure of four principle, the cat has grown fat, and times must be grand for such creatures as owls and kestrels, if the gamekeepers have left any of these poor things, which do them little harm; but the voles and their mischief increase at a greater rate than the means for their destruction overtakes them. Can any of your readers suggest a means that shall be adequate? If he could do so he would earn much gratitude, both from many others, and in especial from your present correspondent. The real mouse, *Mus sylvaticus*, with the long tail, is also in quite unusual numbers; but he is hardly as destructive as the vole, although troublesome enough. Probably the wild winter is responsible for the great increase of both kinds, but, whatever the cause, the result is rather disastrous in the gardens.—II.

THE CAUSES OF MANGE IN FOXES.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—There is one point that is exercising the minds of Masters of Hounds, and that is the degeneracy of foxes and the existence of mange. These two evils are akin to one another, for degenerate foxes are more likely to catch mange than vigorous and bold ones, and, on the other hand, the prevalence of mange is likely to cause a degeneration of the race of foxes in any district. Mange is, indeed, not the only cause of degeneracy, but it is by far the most important, though it has the advantage of being, in a great measure, within our power to cure. Mange can be rooted out by sufficiently stringent measures. The earths must be closed, and the infected foxes killed down as closely as possible. Even then, care must be taken that the disease is not reintroduced. There is no complaint more highly contagious, and a late well-known canine veterinary surgeon told me that he was unwilling to receive cases of dogs suffering from this disease into his infirmary, owing to the difficulty of disinfecting a kennel afterwards. The fact is that, in some countries, mange is continually being reintroduced—first, by the importation of foxes which have been kept in infected kennels, or have travelled in hampers or crates previously used for foxes and not thoroughly disinfected; secondly, by the habit which some keepers have of killing off the vixens and keeping the cubs in confinement until they are wanted. The places where cubs are shut up are seldom too cleanly, but, even where the greatest care is exercised, the young foxes unquestionably suffer in health from not having the change and variety of diet to which they are accustomed in a wild state. Foxes eat many kinds of insects, dig out many a field-mouse's nest, catch not a few young birds, and often have a successful stalk after that worst of plagues to game preservers, the hedgerow rat. The fox has a very wide taste in food. Mostly a great cause of mange is gun-hot wounds. These are not always fatal, perhaps are not intended to be so; but a very large number of foxes are shot at in the course of the year by keepers who think that a little peppering will, perhaps, keep the marauders away from their coverts. No doubt, some foxes so wounded die; but they often do so on someone else's beat, which is an advantage to the keeper who fired the gun. In many cases the fox is not meant to die at all, though it would be too much to imagine that a keeper would grieve greatly at the demise of his natural enemy. In every fox-hunting country, and especially at this time of year, it is wise to look pretty closely into what goes on. It would be far better for a hunt in the long run to lose a few foxes altogether than to have mange set up in their coverts, as it infallibly will be if foxes are "peppered."—T. F. DALE.

THE DETERIORATION OF SPRING TROUTING IN THE NORTH.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—Perhaps some of your readers may be able to give a more flourishing account of the history of the delightful sport of early trout-fishing in the North of England than is quite in keeping with my own experience, or that of others whose opinion is based upon many more years than I have enjoyed on the streams of Cumberland, Westmorland, and Yorkshire. As a rule the first of these three counties is a little earlier than the southern parts of Westmorland, and a great deal earlier than Yorkshire, where the fishing in the Wharfe, for instance, is not well under weigh until some weeks after trout are, or used to be, freely caught on the Eden, Eamont, and other more northern streams. The April fishing should be first-class. Shortly speaking it was of the following character. The streams, fished with the wet fly, are in beautiful order throughout the month, unless there is a flood, when a day or two of water unfishable with the fly intervenes. The weather is colder than in the South, and if there is much wind it is nearly always cold; yet by eleven o'clock it ought to be time for fish to be moving, and willing to take the drowned fly, and under the normal state of things which went on until three seasons ago, there was nearly always a rise of natural fly, either March Browns or some form of "dun," about midday, and often another in the afternoon. Then the fish began to take on the surface more or less eagerly, and a "rise" in the angler's sense began, in which the fisherman caught trout fast for a longer or shorter time. Apparently this fairly regular appearance of natural fly put the fish into the mood to take the artificial fly, even when there was no sign of the real insect. At any rate, they did take it, except on exceptionally bad days, and sometimes even when the day was (apparently) very bad indeed. Last year there was a great falling off in this pleasant state of things. It was commonly said

that there was no rise throughout the whole season. This is not quite correct, for I can recall two days out of some thirty on which I was out. This year things were much worse. During fourteen apparently decent fishing days which I spent upon most excellent preserved waters, I can affirm that I did not see in the whole time fourteen trout rise to natural fly. During three favourable days three or four very expert anglers made good baskets. But it was only a few. One of the chosen few, a superb fisherman, and secretary of one of the best Yorkshire clubs, told me that the dearth of aquatic flies was such as he had never known in his experience, and was of opinion that evidence pointed to their gradually dying out. On the Kilnsea water the March Brown was almost entirely absent. During the many days I spent on the Eden and Eamont I saw, at most, seven or eight flies float down at a time, and those only on a few days, when there was a feeble attempt at a rise by the fish. At Easter the well-informed angling correspondent of the *Yorkshire Post* wrote a most gloomy article on the prospects of spring trout-fishing, giving evidence to show that trout had for some years been less and less inclined to take the fly at all. It may be asked whether the supposed unwillingness of the trout to rise may not be due to dearth of fish? That supposition may be true on some waters. But speaking generally, and particularly too, it is not the case. The waters to which I have referred are far more carefully preserved than they were a few years back, and so are the Yorkshire waters mentioned. That there are any amount of trout in the carefully-preserved Eden may be judged from the following. Just after Easter a son of the lessee of one of the finest lengths on the lower Eden (on the most beautiful piece of river scenery in this county, I believe) caught with the fly sixty trout in a day. But to the absence of fly I can give personal testimony. What one would like to know is whether in the cycles of years anything like this has occurred before, and if so, how soon matters improved, or whether it would be of any use to try to "plant" the eggs, or larvae, of the native aquatic flies?—C. J. CORNISH.

DEW-PONDS.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—The name dew-ponds implies that it is a pond supplied by dew, and this, in fact, is the only source of supply to a properly-constructed dew-pond. Why the dew should settle in certain ponds, and keep them full of water, more in the heat of summer than during the cold winter, entirely depends upon the subsoil of the pond, the construction and the position of the pond. The subsoil should be chalk, or any dry subsoil free from worms. The following method should be carefully observed in the construction of a dew-pond: After the earth has been excavated for the proposed pond, a closely-packed layer of dry straw, some 2ft. in thickness, should be strewn over the surface. Upon this straw should be laid a bed of finely-puddled clay. This double layer of straw and clay should be very thoroughly trampled by horses so as to consolidate the whole. The clay must be carefully tucked round the outer edges of the straw, so that when the pond becomes full of water no moisture shall penetrate the straw. Upon the consolidated surface of the clay a layer of stone should be strewn. After this the filling of the pond may be left to the laws of Nature. With regard to the position of the pond, care should be taken that it is situated on some high ground, where there is no chance of any water draining into the pond. The very top of a chalk down is an ideal position. The reason why the pond becomes full of water is owing to the fact that the layer of straw acts as a non-conductor of heat from the earth, and thus the clay surface remains cold. The moisture in the atmosphere is deposited upon the cold surface of the clay. The process of evaporation during the day chills the water in the pond, and the colder the water is the less evaporation takes place. Thus the evaporation during the day is curtailed, whilst the tendency to the deposition of dew during the night is increased, and the pond becomes night by night more fully charged with water. Heavy animals should not be allowed to enter the pond; should they do so, it is possible that they might pierce the clay with their feet, and thus allow the water to soak into the straw-bed. Should this happen, the straw would no longer act as a non-conductor, and the pond will probably dry up. There is ample evidence to show that dew-ponds constructed during Neolithic times, some 4,000 years ago, are still full of water. The one below Chantonbury Ring, near Worthing, is a very fine example. It is very well fortified with its ancient entrenchments, and the cup-shaped depression in the ground by the side of the pond marks the site of the guard-house.—ARTHUR JOHN AND GEORGE HUBBARD.

THE QUESTION OF SPORTSMANSHIP.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—In an article on duck-shooting in Kashmir (May 13th), your correspondent writes: "Often the No. 5 shot rattling all over their bodies told us they were out of shot, and we kept on firing many impossible shots, for, after all, as the Scotch keeper used to say, 'they are in more danger than yourself.'" Your paper is largely read by young shooters. Would you point out to them that if they act on these Indian "sportsmen's" advice, and fire at game out of killing range, they are not likely to be asked to shoot again by their host. How these two men would have enjoyed a day's sport with the Baltic Fleet on the Dogger Bank.—H. W.

ROMAN HORSE-TRAINING.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—In view of the article recently published in *COUNTRY LIFE* on "Greek Horsemanship," it may interest your readers to see the accompanying reproduction of a Roman lamp, now in the Louvre, on which is depicted a horse being taught to stand on its hind legs. The Roman horse-trainer is here seen schooling his horse to perform by aid of a formidable-looking whip. The dancing horse figures in that medley of antique learning, the "Deipnosophists, or Banquet of the Learned," of Athenæus. Athenæus tells us that the Sybarites "had carried their luxury to such a pitch that they had taught even their horses to dance at their feasts to the music of the flute." But

disaster came of this truly effeminate horse-training. For the Crotonians, being at war with the Sybarites, and knowing the air to which the Sybarite horses were accustomed to dance, played the same melody on the battle-field, "and as soon as the horses heard them playing on the flute, they not only began to dance, but ran over to the army of the Crotonians, carrying their riders with them." The dancing cavalry horse appears again, in greater detail, in the Annals of Charon of Lampascus, likewise quoted by Athenæus. Charon tells us how the general of the army of a people named Bisaltæ lived, as a boy, in slavery among the Cardians; there he learnt that the Cardian horses were taught to dance at feasts to the music of the flute, standing on their hind feet and dancing with their fore feet in time to the airs which they had been taught. So when war broke out the general of the Bisaltæ secured a Cardian female flute player, who instructed his own musicians. And when his flute players were sufficiently taught he gave battle, ordering them to play the airs which they had learnt, and which the horses of the Cardians knew, "and when the horses heard the flute, they stood up on their hind feet and took to dancing. But the main strength of the Cardians was in their cavalry, and so they were conquered." Whereby it would seem that the feats of the English cavalry horse, as exemplified in the beautiful musical ride of the Islington Military Tournament, and such other proofs of the intelligence of the ordinary horse when carefully trained, were long ago anticipated. We expect the circus horse to astonish us by his trick work. The dancing horses of the ancient cavalry may serve to remind us of the vast amount of fine intelligence of ear and limb left uncultivated by most horse-owners of the present day.—G. M. G.



and some will hardly be convinced, till one with open wings has been shown them, that it also has a leaf-like under-side, and then they will wonderingly acknowledge that the closed ones are really butterflies. There is also another point worth noting, namely, that these insects, when at rest, draw their antennæ between their closed wings, thus still further hiding their identity.—PATRICK.

COTTAGE BATHROOM.

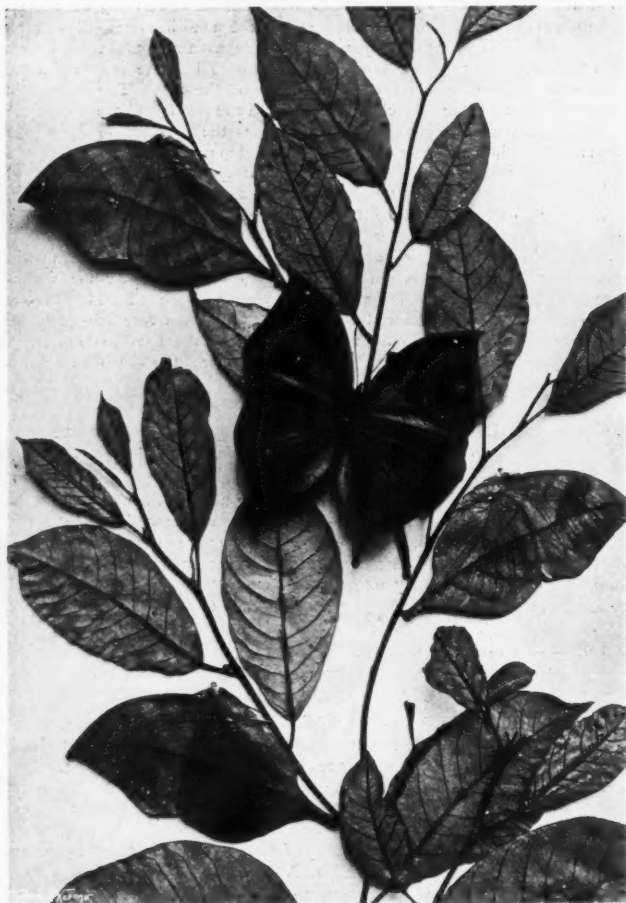
[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."] SIR,—Will any of your readers favour me with a suggestion for providing hot water for a bathroom in the country, built outside, and some little distance from the house, and consequently beyond service from the kitchen boiler. I am aware that geysers are used in such cases, but I have no personal knowledge of them, and opinions with regard to their efficiency and durability vary, and, moreover, they are costly. There is a constant supply of cold water to the bathroom.—SUBSCRIBER.

INCREASE OF NESTING WOODCOCK.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."] SIR,—For fifteen years or more, on several estates in Dorset, Dumfriesshire, and Surrey, keepers and owners have been aware of the presence of one or two woodcocks' nests in their coverts, and in these districts there does not seem to be any such increase as a correspondent of yours mentions on the Border. I cannot help wondering whether the increasingly keen interest shown in natural history now, and the opportunities afforded by papers such as COUNTRY LIFE in

PROTECTIVE COLOUR AND SHAPE IN BUTTERFLIES.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."] SIR,—The Indian leaf butterfly, which measures about 2½ in. to 3 in. across the wings, derives its popular name from its resemblance on the under-side of its wings, which are of a light brown colour, to a dead leaf. We must note here that the leaves it resembles remain flat when dead. Our illustration shows a very good group of these most wonderful butterflies, but their resemblance to the leaf cannot be fully seen in a photograph. If we study the illustration closely we shall see that there are three butterflies among the leaves with their wings closed, and one with its wings outspread. If we inspect one of the closed insects we shall notice that the short tails attached to the lower wings do duty for the twig that would attach an ordinary leaf to its branch. The dark line that begins at the tail is carried right to the tip of the wing, and very closely resembles the central vein of a leaf; the wing is also veined all over, which greatly accentuates the likeness to a leaf—so much so that, when the writer has shown those in his collection to friends, they have never noticed the butterflies that were closed, only those that were open;



disseminating facts, are not responsible for these discoveries rather than a change in the habits of the wild things themselves.—L. B.

MAY-FLY AND CHAFFINCH.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."] SIR,—I should like to enquire if any of your readers have noticed how terribly destructive the chaffinch is to May-fly. On the Frome they take up their position on some branch by the water-side, and rarely let one get off the stream at all. Swallows give them a far greater chance of reaching the grass. In places where the hatch is sparse, it seems to me that a diminution in the number of these birds would result in a corresponding increase in these ephemeridæ.—H. L. T. P.

[It would be a crime to destroy a bird so pretty and so useful as the chaffinch.—ED.]

THE ARRIVAL OF THE SWALLOW.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."] SIR,—In reply to the enquiry of "Chelmsford" in COUNTRY LIFE of the 22nd ult., the swallow appeared this year in Northumberland on April 5th, which is some days earlier than I have known it during the last thirty years, with the exception of 1883, when it arrived on April 2nd. As it may be of interest to others of your readers, I append, from my note-books, a list of the earliest appearance of the bird in Northumberland since 1877:

1877, April 11	1885, April 18	1893, April 11	1901, April 19
1878, " 23	1886, " 16	1894, " 19	1902, " 14
1879, " 25	1887, " 26	1895, " 14	1903, " 29
1880, " 23	1888, " 16	1896, " 17	1904, " 19
1881, " 29	1889, " 22	1897, " 20	1905, " 5
1882, " 19	1890, " 18	1898, " 24	
*1883, " 2	1891, " 24	1899, " 23	
1884, " 23	1892, " 24	1900, " 22	

* Not seen again until the 17th.

It would be interesting if some of your other correspondents would give their experiences.—LICHEN GREY.